

LIVING AND WORKING OVERSEAS

EMPLOYEE GUIDE

April 2004

INTRODUCTION

This guide provides information for individuals who have been selected for employment overseas with the U.S. Army in Europe—information for pre-employment processing, relocation overseas, and general employee information.

Within this document, individuals will see information regarding pre-employment processing, relocation tips, living conditions after arrival, and specific employment information as it applies to the overseas environment.

Positions located in overseas areas are commonly referred to as Outside the Continental United States or "OCONUS" positions; those located within the United States are commonly referred to as the Continental United States or "CONUS" positions. It is important that individuals are familiar with these acronyms--many regulations use them.

Each community is serviced by a Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC), and these offices are the best source of information on employment-related issues such as benefits and entitlements, tour lengths, return placement options, etc.; questions should be directed to the servicing CPAC unless otherwise indicated in this guide.

For more information on the U.S. Army in Europe CPACs, visit the following website: <http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil/cpac>.

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PART I AFTER SELECTION

Job Offer

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Security Requirements

► Job Offer

An initial job offer is tentative until the selected individual's appointment eligibility and entitlements have been verified, and the individual has met all applicable employment conditions. Once these requirements have been met, the selectee receives an official offer that includes information such as eligibility for Living Quarters Allowance, the rate of pay the selectee will receive, and the reporting date. The selectee will be required to complete the in-processing paperwork before starting the new job. The CPAC representative will advise which inprocessing forms must be completed along with the information needed to complete and return the forms. This paperwork must be processed before the employee can get paid. The CPAC/CPOC representative **is the only person authorized to make an official job offer.**

► Inprocessing Forms

The servicing CPAC representatives inform incoming employees of which forms must be completed and returned to the CPAC as part of the inprocessing process.

Most of the inprocessing forms are provided in a format that allows selectees to access the forms on-line. Employees enter the information, print, and then sign the completed forms before returning them to the CPAC representatives.

Many of the forms are in Adobe Acrobat format. Adobe Acrobat Reader can be downloaded from the following website:
<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>.

► Current Servicing Civilian Personnel Office Assistance

Once a job offer has been received, current Federal employees should contact their current servicing civilian personnel office for assistance with out-processing requirements at the current duty location. In order to successfully transition overseas, the losing civilian personnel office will need to provide the gaining OCONUS Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) with the following:

- Official Personnel Data, commonly referred to as SF-75 information; including the finance mailing address and TSP loan information, if applicable. It must be received before departure for the new job or there could be problems with processing personnel actions and pay data at the new duty location.
- Documentation of any change in Life Insurance (FEGLI), Health Insurance (FEHB) and/or Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) during the last open season.
- Transfer of Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Account. This form is provided in the inprocessing forms. The employee should coordinate with their losing personnel office to have them complete the losing office information. The employee will need to complete the loan account information, if any, and then submit the form to the gaining CPAC for completion of the gaining personnel office section.

- A forwarding address including POC and fax number for the personnel office that is currently maintaining the Official Personnel File (OPF).
- A signed copy of the statutory documentation on Reemployment Rights acknowledging the employee's return rights to the former position upon completion of the overseas tour--this applies to employees transferring within the same agency (e.g., Army-to-Army placements).
- Copy of the Travel Orders, applicable only if orders were prepared at losing personnel office.

► Pre-Employment/Employment Conditions

Drug Testing

Individuals selected for employment in a Drug Testing Designated Position will be informed by the gaining CPAC that a signed DA Form 5019-R, Condition of Employment for Certain Civilian Positions Identified under the Drug Abuse Testing Program, is required. Individuals may also be required to take a drug test prior to being placed into such positions. Revocation of a job offer, removal from the position, or separation from the Federal Service may result from failure to accept this condition of employment or to participate in the program once employment has occurred.

Emergency Essential Positions

Individuals selected for employment in a position designated as emergency essential will be informed by the gaining CPAC that a signed DD Form 2365, Emergency Essential Position Agreement for DOD Civilian Employees Overseas is required. A physical examination is required for individuals being placed in emergency essential positions. In addition, individuals may be required to take the series of anthrax vaccine immunizations including annual boosters as a condition of employment in an emergency essential position. This condition also includes any other immunizations that may, in the future, be required for the emergency essential position. Failure to pass the physical examination or to take the necessary immunizations may lead to revocation of a job offer, removal from the position, or separation from the Federal Service.

Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)

The Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) is a mandatory (for military) enrollment program that works with other military and civilian agencies to provide comprehensive and coordinated community support, housing, educational, medical, and personnel services to families with special needs. An exceptional family member is a child (or adult dependent) with any physical, emotional, developmental, or intellectual disorder that requires special treatment, therapy, education, training, or counseling.

Department of the Army civilians do not enroll in the program; however, they must identify dependent children with special education and medically related service needs, as well as family members with medical needs. This must be

done each time they process for an assignment to a location outside the United States where family travel is authorized at Government expense.

Educational and medical-related services provided by the U.S. Forces Medical facilities and the Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DoDDS) in Europe are limited in comparison to those available in the continental United States. If selected individuals have EFMP needs, it is the responsibility of the gaining CPAC to provide information about available services so individuals may make an informed decision when accepting job offers.

Prior to final acceptance of a position at an overseas location, individuals must complete and return DA Form 5863 (Exceptional Family Member Program Information Sheet). Individuals with exceptional family members identified on the DA Form 5863 will also need to complete the DA Form 5291, (EFMP Educational Summary) and/or the DA Form 5862, (EFMP Medical Summary). These forms are required so that individuals that have EFMP needs may be provided the appropriate information on the availability of educational and medical-related services at or near the new duty station.

The completed forms for individuals with EFMP needs are forwarded to the EFMP staff at the Europe Regional Medical Command and/or the DoDDS liaison person, as applicable. After coordination, individuals are provided the latest DoDDS/EFMP service screening sheet that states whether special needs services are currently available at, or in close proximity to, the new duty station. This information allows selectees to decide if the available services meet the needs of their exceptional family members.

Selection for positions will not be affected by whether or not individuals have exceptional family members. The purpose of collecting EFMP information is to provide individuals with advance information on educational and medical-related services so they may make an informed decision about accepting a position and to ensure a smooth transition for their families.

For more information visit the following web pages:

- Directory of Early Intervention, Special Education and Related Services, http://mfrc.calib.com/snn/efmpac/dir_oconus.pdf
- ERM-ERMC Community Health Resources spreadsheet http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil/staffing/inprocessing/docs/ERM_C_com_health_res.pdf

Physical Examinations

Selection for some positions may require individuals to successfully complete a medical evaluation to ensure they meet the physical requirements of the new position. Individuals notified by the gaining CPAC of a requirement for a physical examination, treatment, or immunization for the position at the

overseas assignment are to immediately make arrangements with the closest Department of Defense medical treatment facility. The physical at the medical treatment facility will be at no cost to the individual. The gaining CPAC will provide instructions on the procedures for obtaining and completing the Certificate of Medical Examination, SF-78.

The cost of an authorized examination by a private physician may only be reimbursed under certain circumstances. These conditions are: 1) no medical treatment facilities are at the processing activity and no federally-designated medical examiners are available; or 2) workload at the federal medical facility precludes scheduling a medical examination without a serious delay in processing the selectee for movement overseas. The CPAC or appropriate Federal medical officer must provide the authorization to the selectee in writing **before** a private physician is consulted. If authorized, individuals must obtain an itemized receipt for the medical services, then pay the bill when received, and then submit the claim for reimbursement. The claim for reimbursement is initiated upon arrival at the overseas duty location. Reimbursement is not authorized if individuals voluntarily elect to use a private physician rather than an available Federal medical officer.

For dependent family members, only the necessary immunizations required for overseas travel are paid by the Government; the employee must pay the costs of all medical treatments and examinations for dependents. Immunizations required for any "personal" foreign travel will not be at Government expense. Under no circumstances will examinations for accompanying family members be reimbursed.

Rotation Agreements

For most positions, it is necessary to sign a rotation agreement for the length of the overseas tour. Normally, the initial tour of duty is 36-months, but there are exceptions. Subsequent tours are up to two years in length. Tour extensions are NOT automatic nor are they an entitlement. Extensions must be requested by the supervisor and agreed to by the employee. The extension may be done for a smaller period of time, but some benefits do not go with shorter extensions, such as Renewal Agreement Travel (RAT). DOD policy on rotation of civilian employees restricts any tours beyond five years for most civilian employees. The servicing OCONUS CPAC can provide employees with specific information relevant to their situation.

Locally hired family members are not subject to their own rotation, however, upon loss of family member status, employees must contact the CPAC. See Part III, Living Overseas, Family Member Employment for more information.

Security Requirements

U.S. Government positions normally require that a background investigation or National Agency Check be completed. The OCONUS CPAC will notify

selectees about the new position requirements. Unless selectees already possess the appropriate background checks or clearances, they must complete the appropriate form(s), such as Questionnaire for Non Sensitive Positions, SF 85, Questionnaire for Public Trust Positions, SF 85P, or Questionnaire for National Security Positions, SF 86. Fingerprints are also required. The Fingerprint Card, SF 87, will be provided by the CPAC.

NOTE: The SF 85P and SF 86 are completed via an electronic program called Employee Personnel Security Questionnaire (EPSQ).

Individuals selected for childcare and some medical positions will be provided additional paperwork required for local and state background checks as determined by their state of residence.

The CPAC will provide specific guidance regarding which form(s) and additional documentation are required.

PART II MOVING TO A NEW LOCATION

Household Goods/Non-Temporary Storage (Deciding What to Ship)

Non-Temporary Storage (NTS)

Shipment of Firearms

Shipment of Pets

Shipment of Privately Owned Vehicle (POV)

Centralized Furnishing Management Office (CFMO)

Furniture and Appliances

Passports, Visas and SOFA Stamps

Requesting a Sponsor

Temporary Lodging Upon Arrival

Transportation Agreements

Travel Orders for Government-Paid Moves

► Household Goods/Non-Temporary Storage (Deciding What to Ship)

Individuals eligible for Government-funded moves will receive Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or First Duty Station travel orders. Upon receipt of orders, individuals must decide which household goods (HHG) are to be shipped and which are to be placed in non-temporary storage (NTS). The total allowed weight of HHG that may be shipped and placed in NTS is 18,000 pounds IAW the DOD Joint Travel Regulation, Volume II, (JTR), Paragraph C5154B. One vehicle may also be shipped in accordance with the JTR, Chapter 11.

Non-Temporary Storage (NTS)

General: NTS at Government expense may be authorized for a period of not to exceed the length of the tour of duty plus 1 month prior to the time the tour begins. Storage also may be authorized for subsequent service or tours of duty at the same or other overseas permanent duty station. When employees ceases to be eligible for the allowance, storage at Government expense may continue until the beginning of the second month after the month in which eligibility terminates unless, to avoid inequity, the overseas command extends the period. Eligibility shall be deemed to terminate on the last day of work at the post of duty.

NTS Documentation: Individuals who place items in NTS at Government expense, must provide a copy of the **Service Order for Personal Property (DD Form 1164)** or **DD Form 1299 (Application for Shipment and/or storage of Personnel Property)** to their servicing CPAC along with the completed Notice of Non-Temporary Storage Form provided with the inprocessing forms. The CPAC will forward the document to the Civilian Personnel Operation Center (CPOC) for establishment of a NTS file. The CPOC will automatically extent the NTS at the end of each fiscal year as long as the individuals meet the eligibility requirements. The CPOC will send letters to the CONUS transportation offices providing them with the new fund cite and will also provide a copy to the employees.

Change of Address Notification: Employees are responsible for notifying their CONUS transportation office that authorized the NTS of any change in their address. If employees receive notices from the CONUS transportation offices that their NTS at government expense has expired/will expire and they are still authorized NTS, they should contact their servicing CPAC immediately to ensure that necessary action is taken to extend the NTS. Normally notices are sent out by CONUS transportation offices to the CPOC at the end of each fiscal year (FY) as a reminder that a new FY fund cite is needed to continue the NTS at Government expense. A copy of this notification will normally be sent to employees at their last known address.

NTS Extension Fund Cite: The CPOC is responsible for extending employees' NTS each FY. They will send a letter to the CONUS

transportation offices providing them with the new fund cites for all employees. Once the NTS extension letters are sent out, the CPOC will provide a copy to the employees.

Shipment of Firearms

Individuals thinking about shipping privately owned firearms (POF) to an overseas assignment must be aware that each country has very specific requirements. Before shipping, ask the sponsor to provide information on the country's specifications. Below is information on a few countries to give an idea of what to expect.

Germany: Shipment of privately owned firearms into Germany is restricted for civilians and must be IAW USAREUR Regulation 190-6. A German weapons registration card (called a Waffenbesitzkarte or a WBK) must be obtained before shipping firearms into Germany. Unregistered importation is prohibited, and prosecution by German law can be expected.

If requirements are met, privately owned firearms are considered personal property and may be shipped with HHG. Shipments must be arranged through the local transportation office. A copy of the WBK must be presented to the transportation officer. A WBK can only be obtained while in Germany, so in almost all cases, one must first arrive, then request a supplemental shipment of HHG to transport the firearms. Supplemental shipments may be made within two years of the effective date of the employee's transfer. Costs to the employee could occur if the shipment exceeds the government's obligation of HHG transportation.

Italy: Shipment of any sort of weapon or privately owned firearm is prohibited. POF includes any weapons that are either designed or can be easily converted to be used for attack, defense, sport, games, or hunting by driving a projectile through the barrel. This includes air pistols, air rifles, and firing replicas of antique firearms. In addition, this ban includes: spring-opening knives, fixed "bowie" knives, straight-edged razors, brass knuckles, blackjacks, cans with sharpened points, pipes, chains, slings, metal spheres, or any like weapon for harming a person. However, pocketknives may be carried, but they must be no more than two inches in length.

Belgium: No restrictions for shipment with personal property. All weapons must be registered with the SHAPE International Military Police upon arrival.

Bahrain: All firearms (handguns, shotguns, rifles) are extremely prohibited. Toy-related guns are also prohibited, as well as sharp knives (other than kitchen knives) and swords.

France: Written approval from the French Government must be obtained prior to shipping firearms into France. Depending on the classification of the firearm, employees must obtain special authorization from the Police Department or be registered with an official gun association for at least 6 months before a request can be made for importation into France. For further information, contact the French Ministry, Direction Generale des Douanes et Droits indirects, 23bis Rue de l'Universite, 75700 Paris RP, Attn: Bureau E/2, Tel 011-33-144-74-46-73.

Kuwait: Importation of firearms is prohibited.

Qatar: Importation of firearms is prohibited.

Turkey: Importation of firearms is prohibited.

Luxembourg: Individuals wishing to import firearms must send a description of the weapons and their intended use to the Administration Officer and receive written approval prior to shipping.

The Netherlands:

- a. Personnel residing on the economy must register weapons with local police authorities. Failure to register firearms may result in confiscation of weapons. The use of firearms in the Netherlands is uncommon because of hunting formalities, availability of shooting ranges and stringent laws governing their use.
- b. Host nation policy is to absolutely minimize the import of weapons. Although there are no restrictions on import quantities, the need for having a weapon must be proven to the local authorities. Military installations might have restricted storage facility for personally-owned firearms, due to lack of adequate storage facilities.
- c. Membership in a local (Dutch) rod and gun club is mandatory. Firearms must be fired (at least 8 times a year) at an authorized range.
- d. Firearms may be shipped in HHG or unaccompanied baggage (UB). However, they must be clearly identified on the carrier's descriptive inventory.

England: Importation of handguns is a criminal offense under British law. Some firearms are permitted in the UK (certain rifles and shotguns), but it is strongly recommended to not ship any sort of shotgun. A firearm certification and licensing is required, and use is strictly limited. Prohibited weapons include mace, tear gas, switchblades, butterfly knives, swordsticks, knuckle-dusters, self-loading firearms, pump-action rifles, repeating shotguns with a barrel of less than 40 inches, firearms disguised as other objects (walking sticks, umbrella shotguns, air cans, pen pistols, belt buckle pistols), all hand and stun guns, and all ammunition and explosives including fireworks.

Shipment of Pets

Shipment of pets is the responsibility of the pet owner. Payment for transportation, vaccinations, and proper documentation is the responsibility of the pet owner. The government does not reimburse such costs, associated with bringing a pet overseas. Each airline and country has specific transportation requirements that pet owners must follow. Many airlines have "heat restrictions" when the temperature rises above a certain limit and they will not ship pets during those periods. Individuals should be sure to inquire about such restrictions when making their arrangements for shipment of their pets.

For example: If shipping a dog and/or cat into the Frankfurt Airport, there are requirements that must be met in accordance with German Law. The owners must decide if they will accompany the animal or ship it separately. In either case, a bilingual health certificate (dated within 10 days of shipping) and current rabies vaccination (given 30 days to 1 year before arrival) are required. Most U.S. civilian veterinarians and all CONUS military veterinarians have the bilingual health certificate. If the pet accompanies the owner on the flight there are no additional country costs, and clearing customs with the proper paperwork is quick and easy. If the animal is shipped separately, there are additional requirements and a fee.

Restrictions for certain breeds of dogs: The importation of four dog breeds (Pit Bull Terrier, American Shaffordshire Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, and Bull Terrier) and cross breeds of the same are prohibited in Germany. Several other breeds of dogs are also restricted. This ban applies to all U.S. personnel. Ignoring these rules will result in fines or imprisonment for the owner, and seizure and extermination of the pet.

For more information, contact the local military Veterinary Treatment Facility or the commander of the 100th Medical Detachment in Germany - 100thdcts@med30.heidelberg.amedd.army.mil.

England, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Turkey also have restrictions on certain breeds; the sponsor can assist in gaining the needed information.

England has very strict requirements about bringing animals into the United Kingdom that may include a period of quarantine of up to 6 months. For additional information about bring animals into the United Kingdom, visit the following website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/index.htm> or ask the sponsor.

Shipment of Privately Owned Vehicle (POV)

When shipping a vehicle, timing is important. Shipping of a vehicle can take six weeks or longer. Only one vehicle may be shipped at government

expense. There is no authorization for reimbursement of rental vehicles to replace the shipped vehicle. However, for individuals wishing to rent a car at their own expense, it is usually cheaper to rent in the States. Individuals interested in renting a car in the overseas area, should ask their sponsor about rental cars and rental requirements for that specific area. Sponsors are generally willing to help with transportation needs, but be considerate—they are merely being helpful.

There are restrictions on shipment of autos to some overseas areas. Military and civilian personnel who want to ship vehicles overseas must present an original certificate of title or a certified copy of the title, according to U.S. Customs Service regulations. If the vehicle is leased or has a lien, the shipper must also present a letter from the lien-holder authorizing shipment. Shippers are encouraged to review the Military Surge Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) pamphlet, "Shipping Your POV" at the following website: <http://www.mtmc.army.mil/CONTENT/8808/DBCN8808.pdf>. For general questions, telephone the SDDC at 1-800-843-8755, DSN 328-3333, or commercial (703) 428-3333.

Individuals must have their overseas driver's license (which is obtained after arrival at the overseas duty location) and proof of purchase along with a warning triangle, a first aid kit, and, in some countries, a fire extinguisher before picking up and registering their vehicle. The triangles, kits, and extinguishers may be bought at the Post Exchange (PX). The vehicle will have to pass a safety inspection to be registered. Vehicles must be able to accommodate license plates on both the front and back.

Car repair, even at a PX, is expensive abroad. Parts and tires, especially for American cars, may not be readily available. Although anything can be ordered, it is generally wiser to have all repairs done before shipping.

There are a number of large cars, even in Europe, but handling and parking them can be more than a little challenging as roads, parking spaces, and areas in general tend to be much smaller than in the States. Leaded gas is impossible to find in many European countries so it is no longer necessary to remove the catalytic converter before shipping. Car insurance is very expensive overseas, especially for some specialty automobiles or sports utility vehicles with large engines. Try to get a quote before shipping to get an idea of what to expect.

Individuals who ship a car should keep and bring their stateside vehicle registration. Also, **KEEP** the shipping documents for the duration of the overseas tour, even if the vehicle is replaced.

Individuals who do not ship a car can arrange to purchase a new or used vehicle pretty easily, once overseas. Remember that any car purchased or

brought overseas has to pass a basic safety and emission vehicle inspection to be registered.

As always, check with the sponsor for any special requirements.

► **Centralized Furnishing Management Office (CFMO)**

The USAREUR furnishings program (see Furnishing Support below) is operated by each installation's CFMO). The CFMO provides eligible Federal employees with appliances (such as dishwasher, washer and dryer, wardrobes, and a kitchen cabinet) for the duration of the tour of duty. The CFMO will provide specific information about what is authorized at the specific installation. CFMO may also provide additional loaner furniture pending arrival of the household goods shipment and pending departure after the household goods shipment at the end of the tour.

Employees must bring the following documentation to the CFMO in order to establish a CFMO economy account:

- Permanent Change of Station (PCS) Orders
- Transportation Agreement
- Certificate of Assignment (for Belgium)
- Housing-approved lease contract
- Verification of transportation agreement and eligibility for Living Quarters Allowance (LQA)

Furnishing Support (Furniture and Appliances)

In accordance with Army Regulation 210-50, paragraph 9-18b, U.S. DOD civilian personnel, both appropriated and non-appropriated fund, recruited in the United States are eligible for furnishings support. Funding of the USAREUR furnishings program is limited to authorization levels for eligible service members and DOD civilian personnel. USAREUR Regulation 210-6 further defines eligible personnel, including Army and Air Force Exchange Service employees (but not contractors) and OCONUS-recruited DOD civilian employees who receive a Living Quarters Allowance (LQA). Neither OCONUS-recruited DOD civilian personnel who are not entitled to LQA nor contractor personnel are eligible for furnishings support.

It is important to note that furnishings support for eligible civilian employees is limited to appliances, wardrobes, and a kitchen cabinet for the duration of the tour of duty, but a set of loaner furniture may be issued for 90 days pending the arrival of household goods (HHG) and 60 days prior to departure. This is based on the full DOD Joint Travel Regulation, Volume II (JTR), Paragraph C5154.B weight allowance for DOD civilian employees, including the provision that those who placed HHG in CONUS non-temporary storage (NTS) will not receive a like item from the government furniture inventory.

Individuals are advised to not bring major appliances such as washers, dryers, refrigerators, stoves, or microwave ovens. Due to the difference in electricity cycles, U.S. appliances that use timers of any sort do not work properly abroad—even if they can use 220-volt electricity. In addition, many European houses do not have enough space or proper water hookups for American washers and dryers: in Europe most washers and dishwashers heat their own water and so need only cold water hookups. The sponsor can provide assistance in getting specific information from the installation's Directorate of Public Works.

Because the houses, apartments, and the rooms themselves are often smaller than in the U.S., many people coming overseas store some of their furniture. However, before putting items in storage, think about doing without them for three to five years.

| Authorized loaner furniture (when available) that civilians may be issued (for 90 days pending the arrival of household goods and 60 days prior to the departure). | Authorized furniture that civilians may be loaned for the duration of the entire tour |
|--|---|
| Double Bed complete--1 per quarters | Dryer (American or European)--1 each |
| Single Bed complete--1 per child over 12 months of age | Range (electric or gas)--1 each |
| Bookcase--1 per quarters (if available) | Refrigerator--1 each |
| Chair (Dining)--4 per quarters plus 1 per Desk | Washer (American or European)--1 each |
| Chest of Drawers (6 drawers)--1 per family member | Kitchen cabinet--1 each |
| Dresser Double--1 per quarters | Wardrobe--1 per family member plus 1 additional for quarters |
| Coffee Table--1 per quarters | Light fixtures available are: Lamp (Kitchen)--1 each Lamp (Dining Room)--1 each Lamp (Living Room chandelier)--1 each Lamp (Bedroom)--1 per bedroom |
| Desk (flat top)--1 per quarters (if available) | |
| Table (kitchen)--1 per quarters/when dining tables are not available | |

► Passports, Visas and SOFA Stamps

Passports: Individuals selected for an overseas position and their families will need official passports prior to traveling (the government will cover this expense). **This is the first order of business for the move overseas** once the final job offer has been accepted. You may begin the passport application process prior to receipt of the travel orders. Tourist passports will be needed for personal travel; these are easiest to obtain while in the States. The most common delay in obtaining passports is that many people do not have the

required birth certificates with raised seals. These should be requested from the state Bureau of Vital Statistics where the person was born. It is also a good idea to have a couple extra copies. No additional documents are necessary other than the application for individuals who already have a passport, even if it is expired.

Visa (Italy): Italian immigration law requires all civilian component personnel and all family members of soldiers and civilian personnel, who intend to stay longer than 90 days, to have a visa issued by an Italian Consulate **prior to entering** Italy. There are no exceptions. The U.S. government will not reimburse employees for any difficulties that arise, personal or financial, due to arrival in Italy without the proper visas.

Employees and/or U.S. citizen dependents arriving in Italy without the proper documentation required by Italian law may be denied entrance, requiring return to the country of origin at their own expense. A visa cannot be issued in Italy.

For those dependents that are not U.S. citizens, the United States Sending Office (USSO) recommends that all orders for military and civilian PCS travel to Italy contain a requirement for family visas. Visas should be “For Family Reasons (Visto per motivi di famiglia),” not “For Tourist Purposes.” These visas must be obtained prior to departure to Italy from the Italian Consulate in the country where travel originates. If there are family members who are not U.S. citizens, notify the servicing CPAC for inclusion on the travel orders. This may cause some delay of the departure, so plan accordingly.

Visa (United Kingdom): New United Kingdom (UK) immigration rules require people visiting the country for more than 6 months to obtain entry clearance prior to traveling to the U.K. Full enforcement of the new rules started January 13, 2004. Since this date, civilian employees without entry clearances may have been denied entry into the U.K. Processing of entry clearance is expected to take less than a week for routine applications but could take as long as 45 days.

- The employee and each family member requiring an entry clearance must each pay a fee, approximately \$125 at the current exchange rate, payable in local currency plus a \$16 fee for mailing costs. Personnel should contact the local British Consulate Visa Section for the exact fee.
- Information concerning the reimbursement of these fees can be found in the DOD Joint Travel Regulation, Volume II (JTR), Chapter 4, paragraph C4750.

- Within the United States, a single British Consulate has been designated as the main processing center for applications for each section of the country.
- Applicants east of the Mississippi River should submit applications to:
British Consulate
845 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022
Attn: Sarah Granville-White/Yvonne Foley
(212-745-0200)
- Those living west of the Rocky Mountains will submit their applications:
British Consulate
11766 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1200
Los Angeles, CA 90025-6538
Attn: Francesca Dooley/Des Brewer
(310-481-2900).
- Finally, those living in between those two areas will be serviced by the Chicago consulate at:
British Consulate
The Wrigley Building
400 N Michigan Ave, Suite 1380
Chicago, IL 60611 (312-970-3854).

More information on British consulates in the US may be found online at <http://www.britainusa.com/>.

Information on British consulates worldwide may be found at www.ukvisas.gov.uk <<http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk>>.

For more information on passports and visas ask the gaining CPAC or review USAREUR Regulation 600-290, Passports and Visa.

Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA): (Except for Italy) The NATO Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), Article III, requires that eligible civilian employees and their dependents have a SOFA identification in their official passports. This identification is commonly called a SOFA stamp or SOFA letter. It identifies the bearer as a person who is entitled to unrestricted entry and exit from most foreign countries. Contact the local SOFA office for information about obtaining a SOFA stamp and the requirements of the country where the position is located. For more information on SOFA identification in Europe review USAREUR Regulation 600-77, Status of Forces Agreement Identification.

► Requesting a Sponsor

The USAREUR Sponsorship Program contributes to a positive climate by welcoming civilian employees and family members to the Army in Europe.

Employees who have been selected for an overseas assignment should complete a DA Form 5434, Sponsorship Program Counseling and Information Sheet, and return it to the servicing Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) together with all other inprocessing forms. All civilians are encouraged to participate in this program regardless of whether or not they have previously worked overseas. A sponsor can answer many questions about the move, the new job, and living overseas, etc. The sponsor will also be able to provide the new mailing address once the travel orders have been completed. Transportation and other logistical arrangements should be arranged in coordination with the assigned sponsor.

► Temporary Lodging Upon Arrival

The lodging office for the specific OCONUS location can assist with temporary lodging upon arrival overseas. Individuals selected for a position overseas can provide a copy of their travel orders and contact information to the appropriate office indicated below. This will enable the lodging staff to coordinate lodging reservations and dates of arrival, so that new employees arriving overseas are able to stay on post, when at all possible, or convenient lodging can be arranged locally, until they can move on-post or obtain lodging off-post. A Non-Availability Letter is not necessary to utilize local lodging. Be sure that the lodging arrangements are for the date of arrival overseas. This is not always the same as the date of departure. Many people make reservations for their date of departure instead of their date of arrival which can cause problems.

For additional information about lodging upon arrival in country, contact the appropriate office indicated in the table below.

| ARMY LODGING | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| 6th ASG | | |
| Swabian Inn | Patch Barracks Arkansas Str, Bldg. 2506 Stuttgart | DSN 430-7181/7137 Civ. (049) 0711-67840 Fax (049) 0711-6784199 |
| Hilltop Hotel | Robinson Barracks Korberstr, Bldg. 169 Stuttgart | DSN 420-7193 Civ. (049) 0711-8965270 Fax (049) 0711-896527199 |
| Kelley Hotel | Kelley Barracks, Bldg. 3301 Stuttgart | DSN 421-2815/2304 Civ. (049) 0711-907260 Fax (049) 0711-907261124 |
| 22nd ASG | | |
| Casa Toscana | U.S. Army Camp Darby, Bldg. 202 Via Vecchia Livornese, Tombolo/Tirrenia (PI), Italy 56018 | DSN 633-7580 Civ. (0039) 050-54-7580 Fax (0039) 050-54-7564 |
| Ederle Inn | Caserma Ederle, Bldg. 345 Viale Della Pace, Vicenza, Italy 36100 | DSN 634-8034/35/36 Civ. (0039) 0444-51-8034 Fax (0039) 0444-51-5380 |

| 26th ASG | | |
|--|--|---|
| 233nd BSB Darmstadt Railgunners Arms | Bldg. 4502, Babenhausen Bks | DSN 348-3655 Civ. (049) 06073-6880400 |
| Patriot Inn | Benjamin Franklin Village | DSN 348-1700/7520 Civ. (049) 06151-60190 Fax (049) 06151-6019136 |
| 293nd BSB Mannheim Franklin Guesthouse | Fuerther Strasse Bldg. 312 | DSN 380-9218 Civ. (049) 0621-7309218 Fax (049) 0621-738607 |
| 411th BSB Heidelberg U.S. Army Guesthouse | Patrick Henry Village, North Lexington Ave., Bldg. 4527 | DSN 370-1700/388-9387 Civ. (049) 06221-7951009 Fax (049) 06221-795600 |
| 415th BSB Kaiserslautern (Serviced by Air Force) | Central Reservations | DSN 480-4920 Civ. (049) 06371-45-4920 |
| 415th BSB Ramstein Inn (Ramstein Billeting) | Ramstein Air Force Base Bldg. 2408 | DSN 480-4940/50 Civ. (049) 06371-45-4940/50 |
| 415th BSB Ramstein Inn (Landstuhl Billeting) | Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Bldg. 3752 | DSN 491-4610 Civ. (049) 06371-907-4610 |
| 415th BSB Ramstein Inn (Vogelweh Billeting) | Vogelweh Bldg. 1002 | DSN 489-8910 Civ. (049) 0631-536-8910 |
| 80th ASG | | |
| Hotel Maisieres | Belgium 189 a Ch. De Bruxelles, Maisieres | DSN 366-6313 Civ. 0032-65-739303 Fax 0032-65326313 |
| 98th ASG | | |
| 235th BSB Ansbach Franconian Inn | Katterbach Bismarck Kaserne, Bldg. 5908 | DSN 468-1700/467-2812 Civ. (049) 09802-832812 Fax (049) 09802-1707 |
| 279th BSB Bamberg Bamberg Guesthouse | Warner Barracks Bldg. 7678 | DSN 469-1700 Civ. (049) 0951-3008604 fax (049) 0951-37957 |
| 280th BSB Schweinfurt Bradley Inn | Conn Barracks Bldg. 89 | DSN 354-1700 Civ. (049) 09721-7940 Fax (049) 09721-794145 |
| 417th BSB Würzburg American Guesthouse | Leighton Barracks Rottendorfer Strasse, Flugplatz, Bldg. 2 | DSN 350-1700/6648 Civ. (049) 0931-705820 Fax (049) 0931-7058257 |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| 417th BSB Kitzingen Woodland Inn | Harvey Barracks Richthosen Str, Bldg. 166 | DSN 355-8600 Civ. (049) 09321-370110 Fax (049) 09321-370123 |
| 100th ASG | | |
| 282nd BSB - Hohenfels Sunrise Lodge | Main Post, Bldg. 63 Truppenübungsplatz | DSN 466-1700 Civ. (049) 09472-950155 Fax (049) 09472-950154 |
| 409th BSB - Grafenwöhr Tower Inn | Lager, Bldg. 209 | DSN 475-1700/6182 Civ. (049) 09641-930103 Fax (049) 09641-930930 |
| 409th BSB - Vilseck Kristall Inn | Rose Barracks Bldg. 275, Südlager | DSN 476-1700/2555 Civ. (049) 096624-41104 Fax (049) 096624-41140 |
| 104th ASG | | |
| 221st BSB - Wiesbaden American Arms Hotel | Frankfurter Str. 17 | DSN 338-7212/7493 Civ. (049) 0611-343664 Fax (049) 0611-304522 |
| 222nd BSB - Baumholder Lagerhof Inn | Smith Barracks Bldg. 8076 | Civ. (049) 06783-9993400 Fax (049) 06783-9993455 |
| 284th BSB Giessen Giessen Guesthouse | Giessen Depot Bldg. 63 & 65 | DSN 343-1700 Civ. (049) 0641-943-6666/67 Fax (049) 0641-42052 |
| 284th BSB Friedberg Guesthouse | Ray Barracks Bldg. 3643 | DSN 324-1700 Civ. (049) 06031-73380 Fax (049) 06031-7338333 |
| 414th BSB - Hanau Hanau Lodging | | DSN 322-1700/8357 Civ. (049) 06181-9550 Fax (049) 06181-955197 |

► Transportation Agreement

Individuals recruited from CONUS who are eligible for a government-paid move are required to sign a Transportation Agreement. This agreement provides for the payment of the travel and transportation expenses to the OCONUS duty station and return to the actual residence at the time of appointment upon completion of the overseas tour. These expenses include allowances for the movement of the employee and the employee's immediate family, movement and storage of HHG, and other allowances incidental to appointment or transfer to an overseas location. It also provides for return travel and transportation allowances when an employee is separated early for reasons that are beyond their control and that are acceptable to the agency.

Individuals recruited from OCONUS who are eligible for a government-paid move are required to sign a Transportation Agreement. Depending upon the individual circumstances of such individuals residence OCONUS, the entitlements of the government-paid move may be limited.

Although the agreement is for a prescribed tour of duty, an employee must remain in government service for at least 12 months, beginning with the effective date of appointment, or he/she may be subject to repayment of all travel and transportation expenses paid by the government.

► **Travel Orders for Government-Paid Move**

As a part of the job offer, the gaining CPAC Representative will indicate whether or not Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or First Duty Station travel costs will be paid for the move. Travel orders will be needed before travel and transportation arrangements can be made for the selectee, his or her family, and personal belongings. Travel orders are needed before individuals, working through the U.S. Military Transportation Office and the Scheduled Airline Ticket Office, can obtain plane tickets for themselves and eligible family members, arrange for shipment and storage of household goods (HHG), and arrange for shipment of a vehicle, and obtain temporary quarters and meals. A Request for Orders form must be completed and returned to the CPAC as soon as possible. Marriage licenses and/or children's birth certificates must be faxed with the request for orders to document the family relationships. In some instances, court documents establishing legal custody of children must also be provided.

PART III LIVING OVERSEAS

Adult and Higher Education

Banking and Money Exchange

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Medical Care for Civilian Employees

Newspapers, Television, Radio, and Movies

Pet Care

Post Privileges

Ration Cards

Schools

State Income Taxes

Utilities

 Electricity

 Telephone Service and Long Distance

Value Added Taxes (VAT)

► Adult and Higher Education

There are a variety of educational offerings available at most installations ranging from adult education courses in computer skills, languages, and recreational pursuits to college credit/degree programs through Master's level. Most programs are designed for working people so classes are held evenings and weekends. For more information visit the Post Education Office.

► Banking and Money Exchange

Individuals working overseas can keep their CONUS checking account and/or establish one at the base bank or credit union. Individuals can also keep accounts both CONUS and overseas; just keep in mind the mail delays in deposits made to CONUS banks. Paychecks must be electronically deposited; most other payments from the government can be electronically transferred but some deposits have to be mailed. An ATM card is very useful and can often be used in major cities of most European countries. American dollars and local currency can be obtained at ATMs, banks, and credit unions on base.

People find they use cash much more than they did in CONUS. Although many stores and hotels take credit cards, they are not as commonly accepted as in the U.S. Individuals can arrange either a checking account with a local bank or get local currency checks from the base bank, but these are not commonly used. If a check is needed in a currency other than dollars, the post bank or credit union can provide one for a nominal fee.

The on-post bank can change several different types of currency, but large quantities or non-local currency may have to be ordered a few days in advance. Exchange rates are generally better in the country of the currency's origin, so it is a good idea to wait until arriving before exchanging. It is easy to find exchanges; they can be found in airports, train stations, banks, and money exchange offices, but DO NOT deal with street changers—one can expect to be cheated or worse. It is always a good idea to have a small amount of currency in advance, whether for the cab driver or a cup of coffee, before money exchange can be made at local facilities. Currency for many of the former Eastern Bloc countries must be bought in the country. Also, be aware that there is a fee for exchanging, so avoid changing too much money.

| The following countries use the Euro as a common currency: | | |
|--|---------|-------------|
| Austria | Germany | Luxemburg |
| Belgium | Greece | Netherlands |
| Finland | Ireland | Portugal |
| France | Italy | Spain |

► Child and Youth Services (CYS)

Child and Youth Services (CYS) offers a variety of services and activities for young people, ages 4 weeks to 18 years, including programs such as child

development centers, home-based childcare, before and after school services, summer camps, sports and activity programs, and youth centers. Childcare availability varies and some communities have significant childcare waiting lists. It is possible to get on a community waiting list for childcare prior to arriving in the overseas location, so it is recommended that individuals with childcare needs ask if there is a waiting list prior to starting their move overseas. Sponsors can help by contacting the CYS Central Enrollment Registration Office for information.

► Driver's License

Current United States Army Europe (USAREUR) rules require all members of the US Forces, including civilian employees and family members, to have a USAREUR driver's license to operate ANY vehicle overseas. This license may be obtained ONLY from a USAREUR driver testing facility--not in the States. Drivers should get an international driving permit before driving a vehicle outside of Germany (see AE PAM 290-34), however, driving while pending a USAREUR certificate of license is possible only for sponsors who meet applicable regulation-specified criteria and, even then, is discretionary with the ASG Commander (see AER 190-1, para 2-1b). An International driver's license is not acceptable for U.S. sponsored individuals overseas in lieu of a USAREUR driver's license. This requirement applies to either a U.S. Forces-registered vehicle or a vehicle bearing German license plates (e.g., rental vehicles). Be prepared to take the driver's test soon after your arrival overseas. Sponsors can provide a copy of the USAREUR driver's handbook so that individuals may study for this driver's test.

Individuals who will be stationed in Germany can get the Driver's Handbook and Examination Manual for Germany, USAREUR Pamphlet 190-34, by accessing the USAREUR Web Site for publications at <https://www.aeaim.hqusareur.army.mil/library/pam/pdf/aep190-34.pdf>.

A written test is required for individuals possessing a valid driver's license from any state. BE ADVISED however -- it is challenging. Studying is a must to successfully pass the test. The test is a combination of road sign recognition and multiple-choice questions on a variety of driving and safety topics.

Individuals must continue to hold a valid state driver's license and a military driver's license or a German driver's license (former German assignments only) in addition to the USAREUR license. Anyone planning to drive in Europe must obtain a valid state driver's license before leaving the United States.

The following website provides the international road signs chart for Italy: <http://www.aviano.af.mil/newcomer/signs/>.

Since posts in each country administer their own exams, individuals may contact their sponsor for information on obtaining a driver's license and available study aids.

► Emergency Travel for Civilian Employees

Federal employees may receive emergency travel orders and fly back to CONUS on a Military Airlift Command flight (if space is available - Space A) should the following situations occur:

- Death of employee's spouse or an immediate family member
- Death of the employee or a dependent family member in the overseas area (only when the funeral is at the home of record and the surviving employee or spouse is required to return to the overseas area after the funeral)
- Presence of employee or a dependent needed for welfare of seriously ill or dying immediate family member
- Family problems due to serious illness or injury of immediate family member, laying a responsibility on the employee or spouse that cannot be met while overseas
- Divorce cases when custody of children is an issue once a suit has been filed and a trial date has been established
- Any other emergency situation in which failure of the employee or his or her dependents to return to CONUS would create severe and unusual hardship for the employee, spouse, or immediate family members

The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) or local military Staff Duty Office prepares the emergency travel orders that are needed prior to traveling after official verification by the American Red Cross (an official Red Cross message number is required). It should be noted that in the event that there is no space available on a Military Airlift Command flight or if the military flight center does not have flights to the ultimate destination, any travel costs in lieu of or in addition to the space available flight are borne by the employee. Further, individuals under emergency travel orders are not entitled to per diem or travel costs reimbursement. There is no separate leave category for 'emergency leave.' Any leave taken is chargeable to annual, or if applicable, to sick leave.

► Family Member Employment

The skills, experience, and desires of the spouses have a lot to do with the likelihood of employment. However, there are some special complicating employment factors in an overseas area. First and foremost is the supply of family member job seekers versus the number of available positions. There are many more family members than full-time positions. Since employment on the local economy is usually not possible, on-base jobs are very competitive. Second, spouses of civilian employees who relocate overseas with employees are not eligible for military spouse preference for Federal employment. Consequently they have lower appointment standing when referred for a job. These spouses may be eligible for family member preference, regardless of whether or not they have previously worked for the Federal government. If a spouse or other eligible family member currently has civil service status, getting a job should be a bit easier. Many family members will be unable to find

employment that meets their desires for work schedule, salary, or level of work. Family members seeking employment should visit the Employment section of this website (<http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil>) and the local Army Community Support (ACS) Centers, to find out about local job opportunities.

One of the benefits of working overseas, for a military or civilian family member who does not have personal civil service status, is obtaining employment eligibility under the Executive Order 12721. The Executive Order 12721 affords United States citizen family members who work overseas the eligibility to apply for employment directly with Federal agencies upon their return to the United States, if they meet certain criteria.

Family member employment overseas is limited to the length of the sponsor's tour. Because of this limitation, the allowable period of employment under a family member appointment may not extend longer than two months beyond the date of the sponsor's transfer or separation from the area. Locally hired family members on career or career-conditional appointments who lose their family-member status must inform their servicing CPAC of the status change. These employees become subject to rotation and must sign a "Rotation Agreement for Family Members with Career or Career Conditional Status Who Lose Family Member Status While Employed Overseas". Further information may be obtained in USAREUR Supplement 1 to AR 690-300.301.

► Gas and Gas Coupons

Gasoline is expensive on the economy in Europe. The NATO Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) allows the sale of fuel coupons to authorized members of the NATO forces free of local country taxes on a controlled basis. Gas coupons are used primarily to buy gas on the economy to help defray some of the cost. Gas coupons are not expected to cover leisure activities and vacations.

Germany: When privately owned vehicles are registered, owners receive a copy of AE Form 190-1A, USAREUR POV Registration/Title Certificate, which conveys their gasoline allowance and is used as their ration document for gasoline. Individuals may purchase up to 400 liters per month. The registration document must be presented every time gas is purchased at AAFES gas stations and when gas coupons are purchased. The amount purchased is annotated on the registration document.

In Germany, gasoline may be purchased with the coupons at most ESSO stations. The coupons can be used at most BP and some ARAL stations on autobahns only. In addition, gas coupons may be purchased specifically for use at ESSO stations in the Netherlands. The higher-graded gasoline coupons are good in both Germany and the Netherlands. Gas is dispensed in liter increments rather than gallons. Coupons are issued in a variety of denominations in the same book for the user's convenience. There is no

change or refund from the gas station if the coupons exceed the amount of liters that have been pumped.

Italy: Italy rations gasoline at a much lower amount to employees stationed there, 300 liters per month for most vehicles. Gas coupons are used at AGIP and some ESSO stations; they can only be purchased in Italy.

United Kingdom: Gas coupons are available for employees stationed in the United Kingdom. In the UK gas coupons can only be used at specified stations. The type of gas stations may be BP, ESSO, SHELL, TOTAL, or ELS.

Belgium: Gas cards are used at Fina and Total Fina stations; they can only be purchased in Belgium.

ESSO maps show the locations of all their stations. The maps may be purchased at most ESSO stations and can be helpful when trying to locate the next ESSO station and the gas gauge is heading toward "E". The Navy exchange in the UK provides employees with a list of stations in the UK that will accept the coupons. When driving in other countries, gasoline will have to be purchased as needed.

► Host Country Orientations and Language Classes

The Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Family Support Centers as well as United Service Organizations (USO) offer several local area orientation programs and introductions to the host country's language. Also, the Post Education Office offers conversational language classes at several levels of difficulty, as well as college credit language courses. Contact these offices directly for details and watch for recurring publicity on offerings and registration procedures. Surviving in Europe without speaking the host country's language is quite possible, but the tour will be more enjoyable and individuals feel more comfortable in the community with some familiarity with the country's culture, customs, and language. Europeans appreciate an effort to speak their language - it is their country after all - and are very accepting of less than perfect results, so don't be afraid to give it a try.

► Housing Office and Contracts

In most locations civilian employees are not authorized on-post housing. The government Housing Office can help with the search for suitable quarters on the economy. The Housing Office should also approve the employee's quarters and rental contract to make sure the quarters are adequate, rental fees are fair and reasonable, and conditions of the lease are equitable and understood. The Housing Office can also assist with landlord problems or complaints after occupancy of the quarters. There is normally adequate, good quality housing available within a reasonable distance of each military community. Depending on the time of year and an individual's needs and preferences, the search may take a few weeks or several months. Single-family houses are rare -- most are at least

duplexes or some other form of multi-family dwelling. Many landlords accept pets; some do not. Sponsors or colleagues are good sources of information in locating a house. Realtors are also available to assist in the search, but they charge a realtor's fee. Individuals may claim reimbursement for the realtor's fee up to the maximum entitlement, if eligible for miscellaneous expenses. This may or may not full cover the cost of the realtor.

► Identification Cards (ID)

One of the first orders of business after arrival is to get an ID card. This card is required to get on post, into the Commissary and the Post Exchange (PX), and to accomplish numerous other day-to-day tasks such as picking up packages at the Post Office. It is also needed to obtain a USAREUR drivers license, register a privately owned vehicle (POV) with USAREUR, and obtain U.S. Forces license plates. Civilian employees and their authorized family members are issued an ID card that must be carried at all times.

Installation Access Control System: IACS is a personnel access verification system that will network a central database to all Installation Access Control Offices (IACO), selected Central Processing Facilities, Military Police (MP) Stations, and Access Control Points in USAREUR and USAFE (Germany only) and will produce an installation pass for those individuals authorized. DOD ID cardholders stationed in the USAREUR area of responsibility or installation pass holders/applicants will need to be registered in the IACS as it is fielded for each geographic region.

► Legal Assistance

The base legal office can help with claims resulting from damage during shipment of vehicles or household goods, income tax questions and form preparation, obtaining a will or power of attorney, and similar legal services.

► Mail and Postal Facilities

Individuals assigned overseas are authorized a Post Office Box at the military postal facility. Once travel orders have been received, a sponsor can reserve a mailbox and provide the new personal mailing address to the incoming employee. This enables the incoming employee to send change-of-address information to correspondents. As with any move, it takes between 30 and 60 days for changes to take effect with correspondents and magazine companies. The sooner they are provided the new address, the less delay and problems will be encountered. Don't forget to put in a forwarding order with the United States Postal Service before leaving the U.S. The Military Postal System (MPS) uses U.S. postage stamps and rates. The MPS moves mail to and from designated CONUS locations, so individuals do not pay overseas mailing charges -- a first class stamp gets letters to and from an overseas APO just as if it were still within CONUS. Individuals will still receive magazines, catalogs, and packages without having to pay international rates, saving a large amount of time and money. Customs forms are required to send packages to and from APOs.

► Medical Care for Civilian Employees

U.S. civilian employees and their family members are eligible for medical care in military medical facilities in the overseas area, but only on a space-available basis. What treatment is available will depend on where one is assigned, but the priority for care is always the same--AFTER active duty military members and their families. In most overseas locations, routine dental or optometry care is not available in the military medical facilities for civilians. Depending on patient demand and care availability, other types of care will not be available from military facilities. Any special health concerns should be discussed with the gaining CPAC and sponsor in order to make sure that health care needs can be met at the overseas location.

Civilian patients will receive an itemized bill by mail for services received at a military treatment facility within 30 days of seeing a healthcare provider. All outpatient services and procedures are separated and billed separately including durable medical equipment, laboratory, and radiology services. Professional charges are listed, and charges are based on procedures performed. Medical Treatment Facilities will also bill for prescriptions filled from physicians within the facility as a result of an outpatient visit. Pay patients pay a \$6 pharmacy-dispensing fee when prescriptions are filled at military pharmacies.

Civilian employees and their family members will probably need to use medical and dental providers on the economy at some point during the tour. Referrals can be obtained from the Tri-Care office of the local military medical facility or from co-workers who have providers they have used and recommend. If stationed in Germany, most doctors and dentists don't require payment before leaving their office, but the bad news is most won't file a claim with the health insurance carrier either. Once employees have paid the local health care provider, they will need to submit a claim to their health insurer for reimbursement of the covered portion of their treatment.

Obviously, health insurance is still needed overseas. DO NOT count on needed medical care being available on post. Most insurance carriers are more flexible regarding what kinds of receipts they will accept from European providers. Employees must contact their health insurance carrier for specific forms and instructions on filing overseas claims. Information about the Federal Employees' Health Benefits program can be obtained from the Army Benefits Center or by reviewing the Office of Personnel Management's Web Site. Only the nation-wide plans under the Federal Employees' Health Benefits program are available to employees stationed overseas. Incoming employees not currently enrolled in one of these nation-wide plans will need to apply within the required time frames to retain overseas health care coverage.

► Newspapers, Television, Radio, and Movies

Since most of us are not fluent in Dutch, German, Italian, or French, we are dependent on English language media for information and entertainment. If an employee is arriving from an area with 100 cable channels, there are going to be some withdrawal symptoms; just remember there are other things to do in Europe besides watch TV.

American Forces Radio and Television Service offers, in most European military locations, two radio stations (one AM, one FM) with rotating formats in attempt to serve all listening interests. These offerings are commonly called American Forces Network (AFN). There are also TV channels with a good variety of network series, movies, sports, and news. There are no commercials. AFN also broadcasts segments of interest to local communities including weather, exchange rates, community events, and other items. Some people purchase satellite dishes, or, where available, subscribe to cable services. Both have some English language offerings such as MTV, CNN, ESPN, and similar channels. A multi-system TV will probably be needed to receive cable or satellite programming. European broadcasts are in a different format from that of the U.S. and cannot be received on most U.S. TVs. AFN can be received on U.S. TVs after renting or buying the AFN satellite package. Multi-system TVs are available for purchase with AAFES and can often be bought second-hand. For additional information visit the AFN web site: <http://www.afneurope.army.mil/>.

Note: In Germany, individuals residing on the local economy may be contacted for payment of the Gebuehreneinzugszentrale, known as the GEZ. This is a basic fee that is paid based on the number of radios and televisions that are in the household. U.S. Federal employees **DO NOT have to pay** this fee. Employees who receive such a bill, should contact the GEZ and inform them that they are members of the U.S. Forces and are exempt from such fees.

All military installations have video rental outlets, sometimes several. There are often English video rental stores in the local community. Most military installations have at least one movie theater. There are often cinemas in the local community that show English language films. It should be also noted that DVD players only play DVDs of the same region. This information will be somewhere on the product. Some products are multi-regional. The regions are listed below.

Region 1: U.S., Canada, and U.S. Territories

Region 2: Japan, Europe, South Africa, Egypt, and the Middle East

Region 3: Southeast Asia and East Asia (including Hong Kong)

Region 4: Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific Islands, Central America, Mexico, South America, and the Caribbean

Region 5: Eastern Europe (Former Soviet Union), the Indian subcontinent, Africa, North Korea, and Mongolia

Region 6: The People's Republic of China

On the same note, televisions must be multi-system or American (NTSC) to handle American video game consoles, VCRs, DVD players, etc., while multi-system or European (PAL) televisions are needed for European consoles, VCRs, etc., etc. European video games (marked "PAL") will not work in American (NTSC) consoles and vice-versa.

The *Stars and Stripes* is an English language newspaper published seven days a week for members of the U.S. Forces. It is a source of international, U.S., and local area news with regular features such as comics, advice columns, classified ads, etc. In fact, the main item missing is advertisements. There are some, but unlike U.S. newspapers, the news stories predominate. The *Stars and Stripes* is sold by AAFES bookstores, in machines on U.S. installations, and is available by home delivery in some communities.

► Pet Care

Civilian employees (and their pets) are eligible to use installation veterinary clinics for routine, scheduled care such as immunizations, checkups, and scheduled surgeries such as neutering and spaying for a fee. Appointments are required. The base vet clinics DO NOT provide emergency care. Local vets will have to be used for any emergency services. The base vet clinic can recommend sources. A full range of American pet care items and foods are available through the commissary and Base/Post Exchange.

► Post Privileges

An overseas assignment grants additional privileges at post facilities. In the U.S., civilian employees are usually able to use the fitness center, library, and other recreational facilities. Overseas, civilian employees with post privileges are also able to use the Commissary and Post Exchange (PX), including the theaters, gas stations (see GAS and GAS COUPONS above), and auto repair facilities. A Government-issued identification (ID) card is required to use these facilities. Items sold in these facilities are free of both host nation value-added tax (VAT) and any other form of sales tax.

► Ration Cards

Because of host nation tax laws, some items are rationed in the commissaries and Post Exchanges (PX), especially gas (see GAS and GAS COUPONS above). Other rationed items in Europe include cigarettes, distilled liquor, and coffee. A ration card will be issued through the employee's organization. (Note: Family member employees are not entitled to receive ration cards through their employment. Their sponsor will obtain authorized ration cards for the family.) The Government ID card is needed to obtain the ration card. The ration card and ID card must be presented when buying a rationed item. Separate ration cards are issued for each adult family member with authorized privileges and should be more than adequate for his or her needs. DO NOT abuse the privilege. Using the ration card to purchase items for someone without authorized privileges (except as a bona fide gift) is a violation of both military regulations and host nation tax

laws. A result of abuse may include loss of privileges, fines, and disciplinary action.

► Schools

School-age children are eligible for registration in one of the Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DODDS) on a space-required, no fee basis if an employee was hired from the CONUS, has a transportation agreement, **AND** is eligible to receive Living Quarters Allowance (LQA). The child's school will depend on grade and residence in the local community. DODDS-contracted bus service is offered in many communities. Employees with school-age children should be sure to get information on bus routes before committing to a house, unless they are willing and able to provide their own transportation. For specific information visit the DOD Education Activity web site at: <http://www.odedodea.edu/>.

IMPORTANT NOTE: DODDS must be made aware of school-age children with special needs. Contact with the DoDDS-Europe Area Office is critical if a child has special needs or exceptional requirements. The employee must obtain required school documents from the child's U.S. school prior to departure for the overseas location. In order to provide accurate information concerning the availability of services, employees must complete and return the Army Exceptional Family Member Program forms to the overseas CPAC as part of the tentative offer process.

Army Exceptional Family Member Program Information Sheet, DD 5863
Army Exceptional Family Member Program Educational Summary, DA 5291
Army Exceptional Family Member Program Medical Summary, DA 5862-R

► State Income Taxes

While assigned overseas employees may be liable for state and local taxes. Some states have no income tax. Other states don't tax income earned overseas. Many states, however, do expect employees to continue to pay state income tax while assigned overseas. Most states require quarterly payment of estimated taxes if they aren't withheld from the employee's salary. It is the employee's responsibility to determine tax liabilities and initiate withholding to meet their obligation. Failure to do so does not reduce or eliminate liability. State and local taxes will be deducted from an employee's pay if this request is submitted. Information about State and local taxes can be obtained from the Pay Information page of this website. Individuals should review this information, print and complete a copy of the withholding certificate for their state, and submit it to the gaining CPAC along with the other inprocessing documents.

► Utilities

Utility arrangements will depend on an employee's location and the arrangements with the landlord. In some cases, heat, water and sewer, and trash

pickup are included in the rent; but in other cases, the landlord or the utility company provides a separate bill. Be aware of the lease requirements. Separate bills are usually provided for electricity, gas, and always for basic telephone service. Most utilities bill throughout the year on an estimated basis then adjusts for actual use once per year. The easiest way to pay is to have the charges automatically deducted from an overseas checking account. Such arrangements often eliminate the need to pay any deposit. In addition, the Value Added Tax (VAT) Office might have a service set up where the VAT will be automatically deducted from the utilities. An account with an on-base banking facility or local host nation bank is needed to accomplish this. Individuals located in Germany, can choose to pay utilities directly in cash at a local post office (Bundespost) or a bank. Normally a small fee is charged for accepting payment.

Electricity

The electrical current in Europe is different than that used in the U.S. The voltage is 220, not 110. In addition, the electrical current cycles are different which means devices such as clocks, washing machines, stereo equipment, computers, or any other electrical appliance with a timer may not operate properly, even with a transformer. Finally, the plugs and wall outlets are different. Does that mean all electrical appliances should be left in storage? No. Major appliances should be stored, especially if government-loaned items are available (see APPLIANCES AND FURNITURE). Other appliances, such as hairdryers, blenders, etc., can be used with the aid of transformers (to reduce the electricity to 110 volts) and plug adapters. Lamps should be brought as they are the easiest to convert -- all they require are different light bulbs and plug adapters, both readily available in the Post Exchange (PX) for nominal cost.

New electric clocks can be purchased overseas. Most people find it much more convenient to also replace small appliances used every day, such as hair dryers or coffeepots, with 220-volt appliances purchased either in the PX, second-hand stores, or on the economy. They get better performance than dual voltage versions and are more convenient than having to use a transformer all the time. In addition, transformers are not cheap and they consume a large amount of electricity when plugged in, even if the connected appliance is not in use.

Many electronics (TV sets, VCRs, stereo equipment, etc.) are now made to switch voltage automatically. That makes life easier but be sure to check the setting before plugging it in. However, plug adapters will still be needed.

Electrical outlets do vary among the European Countries, so universal plug adapters will be needed. The PX is the best sources for these plug adapters.

Telephone Service and Long Distance

Phone service isn't much different from that in the States. On the other hand, some newer houses, for example, are pre-wired for FAX and modem lines in addition to telephone. As in the U.S., individuals may buy or rent a telephone. It is cheaper to buy the phone overseas rather than rent one. Also be aware that American modems may not be compatible with European phone systems.

Regular long distance rates for calls to the U.S. are very high, except in Germany. Individuals who plan on calling the U.S. on a regular basis should look into the various long distance services available from the local telephone service provider or through a commercial service. Most are advertised in base newspapers.

American cellular phones may not work here -- the frequencies are different from those used for overseas service and can interfere with other users. Check with the service provider to see if the phone is compatible for overseas (multi-band) use.

Internet Services: Individuals may choose from a variety of Internet service providers. The local telephone company, the PX, the *Stars and Stripes* newspaper, local post newspapers, sponsors, and co-workers can provide information about what is available in the local community.

► Value Added Taxes (VAT)

Most European countries levy what is known as Value Added Tax (VAT) on all goods and services. It is somewhat like a super sales tax except that the VAT is included in the marked price of whatever is being purchased. Under the NATO SOFA, members of the forces and their families can often be exempted from payment of the VAT. On large purchases this exemption can make a big difference - the VAT can be as much as 22%. Contact the installation Moral, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) office for information specific to the host country.

In Germany and Italy, many utility companies will exempt members of the U.S. forces from payment of the VAT on power or other utilities. The MWR VAT Office can sign employees up for this. There is a one-time nonrefundable fee for the service.

Employees may also purchase VAT Forms, for a nominal fee, which can be used to save the VAT on purchases in Germany of less than 2,500 Euro. If planning on purchasing furniture, cars, or other big-ticket items over 2,500 Euro, contact the VAT office for procedures. Note: The store or company does not have to accept the VAT form. Some hotels also accept the VAT form.

In Italy the process is different. Individuals need to get an "estimate" of the product or item on the company/store's letterhead. They must then go to the

Italian Bank and get a Euro check without the tax. The estimate and the Euro check must be brought to the Tax Relief Office and where they complete the paperwork. Individuals can then return to company/store to pick up their merchandise.

For further information on this benefit, visit www.mwr-europe.com and choose "Tax Relief" from the left side menu.

PART IV EMPLOYEE EMPLOYMENT GUIDES

Section A Employment Information for All Employees

- Army Benefits Center - Civilian (ABC-C)
 - Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB)
 - Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)
 - Retirement
 - Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)
- Code of Ethics for Government Service
- Complaint Procedures
- Designation of Beneficiary
- Employee Conduct
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Holidays
- Incentive Awards
- Job Description
- Leave Entitlements
- Long Term Care Insurance
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 - Dual Compensation
 - Living Quarters Allowance (LQA)
 - Paychecks
 - Post Allowance
 - Post Differential and/or Danger Pay Allowance
 - Within-Grade Increase (WGI)
- Performance Evaluation
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- Safety – Responsibility – Injury
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- Temporary Appointment
- Tour of Duty – Hours of Work
- Training Information

► Army Benefits Center – Civilian (ABC-C)

The Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C) located at Fort Riley, Kansas, provides automated benefits support to Department of the Army appropriated fund employees through the Employee Benefit Information System (EBIS), the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS), and trained counselors.

ABC-C automated systems give employees unlimited access to their benefits. Employees can receive personal counseling, process transactions, and obtain general information on retirement, life insurance, health benefits, survivor benefits, and the Thrift Savings Plan. ABC-C automated systems are available 21 hours a day (U.S. Central Time), seven days a week. Both systems are unavailable from midnight to 3:00 am for systems maintenance and backup. Counselors are available from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday to assist employees with any issues regarding their benefits.

The website can be accessed immediately to obtain general information regarding benefit options.

- Approximately 5 days after starting work overseas, employees will be able to access either system to make their initial benefits elections.
- All benefits elections must be made using the automated systems (except where otherwise stated).

Because employees are in control of their benefits, they are required to:

- Obtain and retain a copy of each transaction for their records. Printing the transaction screen on EBIS can do this.
- Verify their transactions within 48 hours of making them by revisiting the website or calling the toll-free telephone number. Make a note of the effective date of the transaction. Both the IVRS and EBIS will provide the effective date.
- Review their LES covering the period in which the action is effective and verify the withholding(s). If this information is incorrect call ABC-C and press "0" for a counselor.

| HOW TO CONTACT THE ARMY BENEFITS CENTER | |
|---|--|
| Mailing Address: | Army Benefits Center-Civilian 301 Marshall Avenue Ft. Riley, Kansas 66442-5004 |
| Accessing ABC-C website (EBIS) | https://www.abc.army.mil |
| Accessing IVRS (Toll Free Telephone System): Employees can access this system by calling 1-877-276-9287; or hearing-impaired (TDD) customers can call 1-877-276-9833. | |
| Accessing ABC-C from Europe: Belgium 0800-78245/DSN 1986 (See note below) Germany 0800-1010282/DSN 1986 (See note below) Italy 800-780821/DSN 1986 (See note below) Netherlands 0800-0232739/DSN 1986 (See note below) United Kingdom 08-000857723/DSN 236-2003 (Dial DSN prefix) Saudi Arabia 1-877-276-9287 NOTE: For Belgium, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands the DSN number has no prefix to dial, just dial the four digits of 1986 to get connected. Be patient! It may take a long time for the line to answer! Listen carefully to each message before making a selection. | |

Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB)

Federal employees are eligible to elect FEHB coverage unless law or regulation excludes their positions.

Temporary Employees: Individuals are excluded from FEHB coverage if they are:

- Serving under an appointment limited to one year or less and they have not completed at least one year of current continuous employment, excluding any break in service of five days or less
- Expected to work less than six months each year

Eligibility to Enroll at Own Cost: If an employee's position is excluded from coverage because the appointment is limited to one year or less he or she will be eligible to enroll under 5 U.S.C. 8906a when one year of current continuous employment has been completed, excluding any break in service of five days or less. The employee must pay both the employee and the Government portions of the premium.

The one-year requirement may be met at the end of a one-year appointment in a single agency or based on a series of shorter appointments served in one or more agencies, as long as the employee has not had a break in service of more than five days.

Intermittent Employment: If an employee is intermittent (does not have a prearranged regular tour of duty) he or she is not eligible for coverage. Seasonal or occasional employment for one calendar year that amounts to less than six months of work, does not meet the one-year of current continuous employment requirement.

Provisional Appointment: An individual who receives a provisional appointment, as defined in 5 CFR 316.401 and 316.403 is eligible for FEHB coverage. The employee may enroll in any available plan, option, and type of enrollment within 60 days after the date of the appointment.

New Appointment: A new employee may enroll in any available plan, option, and type of enrollment within 60 days after the date of the appointment unless the position is excluded from coverage. If the employee was employed in a position that was excluded from coverage and then appointed to a position that conveys coverage, the employee may enroll within 60 days after the change. (This includes individuals being appointed/converted to a temporary appointment without a break in service after completing 1 year of continuous service on a temporary appointment.)

Enrollment: Federal employees working overseas are entitled to enroll themselves and any eligible family members in a nationwide or special groups health plan offered under the FEHB Program unless their position is excluded from coverage by law or regulation. Employees that meet the requirements will be eligible to continue group coverage into retirement. There are two types of enrollment: Self Only, and Self and Family. A Self and Family enrollment covers the employee, his or her spouse, and their unmarried dependent children under age 22.

Effective Date: Unless otherwise specified, enrollments or changes in enrollment become effective on the first day of the first pay period after the employing office or ABC-C receives the enrollment request, and that follows a pay period during any part of which the employee was in a pay status.

Shared Cost: Generally as a Federal employee or annuitant, the cost of health benefits coverage is shared with the government as the employer. Temporary employees enrolled under 5 U.S.C. 8906(a), former spouses enrolled under spouse equity provisions, and most persons covered under temporary continuation of coverage (TCC) do not receive a government contribution towards the cost of their health benefits.

Government Contribution for Part-Time Employees: For a part-time career employee, the government contribution toward health benefits is

prorated in proportion to the percentage of full-time service the employee is regularly scheduled to perform.

Election procedures: Employees must use the Army Benefits Center to enroll. The only instance an employee may submit an enrollment form to the personnel office is when the entrance on duty week is the second week of the pay period. In that case, the employee may submit the enrollment form on the day of inprocessing. Otherwise, enrollment must be done using ABC-C.

Election Required: An employee who is eligible to enroll in the FEHB Program **must complete an election either to enroll in a plan or not to enroll.** This must be done within 60 days after becoming eligible. Generally, the employee will make elections--to enroll, not to enroll, to change enrollment, or to cancel enrollment--through ABC-C.

Employees who do not make an election during the first 60 days of their employment are considered to have elected not to enroll and may not enroll again until open season or an event occurs that permits enrollment such as marriage, loss of coverage under another FEHB enrollment or covered Family Member.

Premium Conversion: Employees who elect Health Benefits are automatically enrolled in premium conversion starting with the first pay period. Once an employee participates in premium conversion the participation continues automatically unless the employee elects not to participate. Each year during FEHB Open Season, an employee may decide whether or not to participate for the following year.

Premium conversion is a tax benefit. It allows individuals to allot a portion of their pay to their employer, who will in turn use that amount to pay their contribution for the employee's FEHB coverage. This allotment is made on a pre-tax basis, which means that the money is not subject to Federal income, Medicare, or Social Security taxes, and in most cases, state and local taxes. The allotment reduces employees' taxable income, so less tax is withheld, and their paychecks are larger.

Newly hired employees who want to waive pre-tax treatment must complete and fax the FEHB Premium Conversion Waiver/Election form to the ABC-C at the same time that they elect Health Benefits.

IMPORTANT: With premium conversion, employees cannot cancel their enrollment or change to a self-only enrollment outside of an open season or a qualifying life event.

Transfer Between Payroll Offices

Continued Coverage: An employee's enrollment and coverage continue without change when transferring from one payroll office to another, without a break in service of more than three days.

Gaining Employing Office Actions: When a transferring employee enters on duty the employing office will:

- Review the SF 75 (Request for Preliminary Employment Data) from the losing personnel office and inform the employee of any opportunities to change enrollment (e.g., if the employee moved out of a HMO's service area)
- Complete a Notice of Change in Health Benefits Enrollment (SF 2810)

Transfer To or From Overseas Employment: Employees may enroll or change enrollment when transferring from a duty post within the United States to a duty post outside the United States or the reverse. They have 31 days before the date they are expected to leave their former duty post and 60 days after their arrival at the new duty post to enroll or change enrollment.

Open Season: Employees eligible for health benefits may enroll during the open season. Employees currently enrolled may change plans, options, type of enrollment, or premium conversion status.

For Additional Information visit the following websites:

<https://www.abc.army.mil> or

<http://www.opm.gov/insure/handbook/fehb00.htm>

Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)

FEGLI provides group term life insurance, and it does not build up any cash value or paid-up value. It consists of Basic life insurance coverage and three forms of Optional insurance that an employee can elect.

Election: Unless a position is excluded from coverage by law or regulation an employee is automatically enrolled in Basic insurance. If an employee doesn't want this coverage it must either be waived when the employee first becomes eligible for coverage or the employee must cancel it. An employee wishing to carry Optional insurance **must specifically elect** the types of Optional insurance **within 31 days of becoming eligible**. An employee must have Basic insurance in order to elect any of the options. If an employee does not make an election, the employee is considered to have waived **optional insurance**. SF 2817 is used to sign-up for or cancel FEGLI coverage. If an employee does not make an

election during inprocessing the employee must use the Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C) to enroll.

Temporary Employment: A new employee serving under an appointment limited to one year or less is excluded from FEGLI coverage.

Intermittent Employment: A new intermittent employee (a non-full-time employee without a regularly scheduled tour of duty) is excluded from FEGLI coverage.

Provisional Appointment: An employee who receives a provisional appointment as defined in 5 CFR 316.403 is eligible for FEGLI.

Break in Service of Less than 180 Days: If an employee is returning after a break in service of less than 180 days, any prior waiver of coverage remains in effect. The employee automatically gets whatever life insurance the employee had before leaving Government and does *not* get an opportunity to make a new election to increase coverage (the employee can cancel or decrease coverage at any time unless the employee has a valid assignment in effect).

Exception: If the employee had a qualifying life event (e.g., marriage, divorce, death of spouse, or acquiring of an eligible child) during the separation from covered service or during the 60-day period immediately before the separation, the employee will have 31 days from the date of reinstatement or 60 days from the date of the event, whichever gives the employee more time to enroll or increase the multiples of Option B or Option C as applicable.

Break in Service of 180 Days or More Automatically Cancels Waiver: If an employee is reinstated after a break in service of at least 180 days, any previous waiver of insurance is automatically cancelled. Unless the employee files a new waiver, Basic insurance becomes effective on the first day the employee actually enters on duty in pay status in a position in which eligible for coverage.

An employee can elect any amount of Optional insurance within 31 days of returning to service regardless of the coverage the employee had during previous employment. If an employee fails to elect any type of Optional insurance the employee will automatically get the Optional insurance carried immediately before the break in service.

Cost: The cost of Basic insurance is shared between the employee and the government. The employee pays 2/3rds of the total cost; the government pays 1/3. The employee's age does not affect the cost of

Basic insurance. The employee pays the full cost of Optional insurance, which does depend on the employee's age.

The FEGLI Calculator at <http://www.opm.gov/calculator/worksheet.asp> allows an employee to determine the cost and benefits of various levels of optional insurance coverage.

Effective Date: Basic insurance coverage is effective the day the employee enters on duty in pay status unless the employee waives this coverage before the end of the first pay period. Optional insurance is effective on the first day the employee enters on duty in pay status, on or after, the day the human resource office or ABC-C receives the election.

Nonpay Status: FEGLI coverage continues during the first 12 months in nonpay status. No premium payments are required unless an employee is receiving Workers' Compensation. Life insurance coverage terminates at the end of this 12-month period, with a 31-day extension of coverage and right to convert to an individual policy.

Waiver/Cancellation of Insurance: An employee may cancel Basic and/or Optional insurance coverage at any time unless the insurance has been assigned. When an employee cancels Basic insurance, it automatically cancels all Optional insurance. Canceling Optional insurance has no effect on Basic insurance.

The cancellation is effective at the end of the pay period in which it is filed with ABC-C.

Cancellation of Waiver: An employee can obtain Basic insurance and/or Options A and B by canceling a waiver if at least one year has passed since the effective date of the waiver, and the employee provides satisfactory medical evidence of insurability. The employee may elect any number of multiples of Option B. If the employee elects fewer than five multiples, the multiples not elected are considered waived (the one year requirement for cancellation of a waiver does not apply if an employee's previous election was limited to fewer than five multiples due to a life event).

Once an employee has waived or cancelled any or all multiples of Option C, the employee can only get the insurance if there is a life event or there is an open season that allows such an election. The employee may not cancel a waiver of Option C by providing medical evidence of insurability.

The employee must have Basic insurance to elect Optional insurance.

If an employee wants to cancel a waiver, the Request for Insurance form (SF 2822) must be completed. The employee will be required to pass a physical examination before coverage will be approved. The employee can get Basic insurance, Option A, and Option B (if the Office of Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (OFEGLI) approves the physical). An employee cannot get Option C by completing this form. Take the SF 2822 to the CPAC and ask them to complete Part A. The employee must complete Part C. Answer all of the questions or mark N/A (for not applicable). Do not leave any answers blank. Then takes this form to a physician or other healthcare provider. Sign in Part C in the presence of the physician or other healthcare provider and ask him/her to complete Part D and mail the completed form directly to OFEGLI. OFEGLI must receive the form within 60 days of the date of the physical. OFEGLI will notify the CPAC if coverage is approved. The CPAC will notify the employee. Please note the employee must pay for the physical, neither the agency nor OFEGLI can pay.

Open Seasons: There are no regularly scheduled open seasons to elect or increase coverage under FEGLI. Open seasons are held only when specifically scheduled by OPM.

For Additional Information review the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Booklet (RI 76-21) or visit the following websites:
<https://www.abcmil.com/abcarmy/abcarmy.html> or <http://www.opm.gov/insure/life/index.htm>.

Retirement

Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS): FERS is a three-tiered retirement plan. The three components are Social Security Benefits, Basic Benefit Plan, and Thrift Savings Plan Benefits. The first available part of the retirement benefit is Social Security. Employees under FERS are covered by full Social Security taxes. It provides monthly payments if an employee is retired and has reached at least age 62, monthly benefits if an employee becomes disabled, monthly benefits for an employee's eligible survivors, and a lump sum benefit upon an employee's death.

Benefit: The basic FERS annuity is based on the employee's length of service and the "high-3" average pay. For most employees the formula for computing the annual annuity is 1% of average pay for each year of creditable service.

Cost: Employees pay 0.8% of pay to FERS for the basic benefit. Employees are covered under full Social Security taxes.

Prior Military: Individuals who have prior military service, but are not receiving military retired pay, are subject to a deposit requirement if they wish to receive credit for that military time. To receive credit for

post-1956 military service, individuals must deposit 3% of their military base pay earned during the Post-56 military service. Interest will be added to the unpaid balance beginning 2 years after the individual becomes a FERS employee. Additional information is provided in the FERS Booklet (RI 90-1) (<http://www.opm.gov/asd/pdf/ri90-001.pdf>).

Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS): CSRS is a contributory defined benefit retirement system. Employees share in the expense of the annuities to which they become entitled.

Benefit: CSRS benefits are based on the employee's "high-3" average pay and the years of service. Under the general formula 30 years of service provide 56.25 percent of the "high-3" average salary.

Cost: Employees pay 7% of gross pay.

Civil Service Retirement System Offset (CSRS Offset): CSRS-Offset covered employees are covered by Social Security coverage because they were separated from CSRS-covered Federal employment for more than a year and returned to a position in which they were covered by CSRS. For those employees their OASDI (Social Security Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance) withholdings are offset from their CSRS contributions, so that the combined Social Security and CSRS contributions are the same as for employees who have CSRS coverage only.

Benefit: When CSRS-Offset employees retire, they receive full CSRS benefits until they are eligible for Social Security benefits, generally at age 62. At that time, the CSRS benefit is offset by the portion of their Social Security benefit that represents the period of time they were covered by both CSRS and Social Security.

Cost: Employee pays 0.8% for CSRS and 6.2% OASDI taxes.

For Additional Information visit the following website:
<https://www.abc.army.mil>.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is a program to provide Federal employees with a tax-deferred savings program for retirement income. It permits participants to supplement their Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) retirement benefits by investing in various funds. An employee can contribute immediately upon appointment to a position covered by FERS or CSRS.

Eligibility: All employees covered by FERS or CSRS are eligible to participate in the TSP and may make contributions elections.

Ineligible: Employees appointed to positions that are not covered by FERS or CSRS (a position covered by OASDI only) are not eligible to participate in the TSP.

Break in Service: A separation from Federal service for more than 30 calendar days.

Start or Stop contributions: Newly hired employees, may sign up to contribute to the TSP within a 60-day period after they are hired. Their contributions will begin no later than the first full pay period after their election is accepted by the agency. Individuals who do not make an election within this 60-day period, must wait until an open season to enroll. The two open seasons are April 15 through June 30 and October 15 through December 31. Generally, elections are made effective during the last month of the open season. Visit the ABC-C web site at <https://www.abc.army.mil> to enroll in TSP or terminate contributions.

Agency Contribution: New FERS employees must serve a waiting period before they can receive agency contributions to their TSP accounts. FERS employees reappointed following a break in service must also serve the waiting period if they had not been previously eligible to receive agency contributions. FERS employees who had been previously eligible to receive agency contributions are immediately eligible for agency contributions upon their reappointment.

FERS employees can begin making Employee Contributions to the TSP before they are eligible to receive Agency Automatic (1%) Contributions and Agency Matching Contributions.

Example: Not previously eligible to receive agency contributions:

1. An employee appointed or reappointed to a position covered by FERS who had not been previously eligible to receive agency contributions becomes eligible to receive agency contributions the beginning of the second election period following the effective date of the appointment.
2. If the employee is appointed during an election period, that election period does **not** count as the first election period.

Open Season (Election): There are two open seasons each year: April 15 through June 30 and October 15 through December 31. The last month of the open season (June or December) is the election period. During the

open season eligible civilian employees may begin contributing to the TSP or change the amount of current contributions to the TSP. Employees covered by the FERS may elect to contribute up to 14% and CSRS covered employees may elect to contribute up to 9% of basic pay. The allowable limits will continue rising with the start of each new fiscal year until they reach 15% for FERS and 10% for CSRS in fiscal year 2005. In fiscal year 2006, the limits will be abolished. However, the IRS-imposed dollar limit on allowable individual contributions into tax-favored plans like the TSP will continue to apply. For FERS employees agency matching contributions remain capped at 5%.

Interfund Transfers/Contribution Allocations: Employees may only make contribution allocations (designate which of the five TSP investment funds money should be placed in) or interfund transfers (change the investment of money already in the TSP account) through the TSP website at <http://www.tsp.gov/> by selecting "Account Access" or by calling the ThriftLine at (504) 255-8777.

Election to terminate contributions: Elections to terminate contributions may be made at any time. Elections to terminate contributions must be made effective no later than the beginning of the first full pay period after they are received.

When is a PIN not a PIN? When it's the wrong PIN! To access their TSP account and make transactions on the TSP Web site or the ThriftLine, employees must use or have a 4-digit TSP PIN. It is different from the 6-digit PIN used to access the ABC-C systems. To request a lost or forgotten TSP PIN, employees must use the TSP Web site at <http://www.tsp.gov> or the ThriftLine at (504) 255-8777 to have a new PIN number mailed to them.

For Additional Information review the booklet, TSP at a Glance (TSPBK09), or visit the following websites: <https://www.abc.army.mil> or <http://www.tsp.gov>.

► **Code of Ethics for Government Service**

- Public Service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.
- Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with conscientious performance of duty.
- Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.

- An employee shall not, except as permitted by applicable law or regulation, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.
- Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.
- Employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the government.
- Employees shall not use public office for private gain.
- Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.
- Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.
- Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment that conflict with official government duties and responsibilities.
- Employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.
- Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those - such as Federal, State, or local taxes - that are imposed by law.
- Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating applicable law or the ethical standards in applicable regulations.

► **Complaint Procedures**

Federal employees have certain resources that may be pursued in the event of job-related difficulties including those listed below. Civilian Personnel Advisory Center Human (CPAC) Resources Specialists will provide guidance to employees having a complaint but not knowing whom to contact.

Grievance Procedures: A grievance is any dissatisfaction an employee may have with any working condition, working relationship, or employment status. The employee may informally present a work-related problem to the supervisor before filing a formal grievance. This informal stage is called the "problem solving process" and is usually the initial step in the grievance process. The problem must be presented within 15 days following the date of the act or event that the employee believes created the problem or within 15 days of the date the employee became aware of the act or event. The employee may file a formal, written grievance when a problem is not resolved during the problem-solving process or when the employee chooses to bypass

this informal process and invoke the formal grievance process. Grievance procedures vary somewhat between the various Defense agencies. Contact the CPAC for more information on grievance procedures.

Inspector General (IG): Matters, which are appropriate for the Inspector General concern complaints or allegations not personal to the employee. They relate to matters that do not directly affect the employment situation or well being of the employee. Examples of appropriate matters include allegations against third parties, reports of alleged mismanagement, etc. For information on the IG Complaint process, contact or visit the local IG Office. An employee can find the phone number of the IG in the post or installation phone directory or through local Directory Assistance.

Equal Employment Opportunity Office: Employees may file a complaint under the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaint system if they feel they have been discriminated against in a job-related matter based on national origin, race, color, religion, age, sex, or handicap. Complaints of sexual harassment are also handled through the EEO system. For more information on the EEO complaint process, visit or contact the local EEO office. The phone number of EEO can be found in the post or installation phone directory or through the local on-post Directory Assistance.

► **Designation of Beneficiary**

Completing these forms is optional but encouraged. There are five designation of beneficiary forms applicable to an employee's benefits and entitlements:

| | |
|---------|---|
| SF-1152 | Unpaid Compensation (Annual leave and any unpaid wages) |
| SF-2808 | CSRS Retirement Contributions |
| SF-2823 | FEGLI (Federal Employees Group Life Insurance) |
| SF-3102 | FERS Retirement Contributions |
| TSP-3 | Thrift Savings Plan |

Employees do not need to name a beneficiary if they wish to have the death benefits paid in the order of precedence noted below.

1. The surviving spouse.
2. The employee's child/children in equal shares with the share of any deceased child being distributed among the descendants of that child.
3. The employee's parents in equal shares or the entire amount to the surviving parent.
4. The duly appointed executor or administrator of the employee's estate.
5. The employee's next of kin under the laws of the employee's domicile at the time of the employee's death.

Employees who wish to designate beneficiaries should complete the appropriate forms above. The original signed forms must be submitted per the instructions on the form.

► Employee Conduct

As U.S. Government employees in Europe, it is essential that individuals conduct themselves in a manner that will bring credit to their profession and to the nation they represent. Remember the conduct and actions of U.S. citizens are continually on display and under scrutiny of European residents. The high ethical and moral standards expected in stateside communities are even more essential overseas. Over the years strong bonds of friendship and mutual understanding have developed between Americans representing the Armed Forces and the members of our host nations. One of the commendable actions of individuals is to provide day-to-day examples of friendship, propriety, and good judgment. Indiscreet actions or public displays of temperament seriously detract from the important mission of building good will for the United States and its allies. Remember that regulations and organized programs cannot develop understanding nor promote good will; INDIVIDUALS CAN!

► Equal Employment Opportunity

Employees of the Department of the Army Appropriated or Non-Appropriated Fund activities and job applicants are guaranteed equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or mental or physical handicap. Employment opportunities are not limited by anything other than mission needs and the individual's experience ability and demonstrated performance.

Individual employees will be uniformly and fairly treated under the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program. They will receive full and impartial consideration for initial employment and subsequent promotions. They will possess equitable standing and security as an employee of the Federal Government, and they will enjoy equal opportunity to receive training, to develop skills and to advance in their chosen occupation and career, subject only to job requirements prescribed by higher authority.

If employees believe they have been discriminated against or denied equal opportunity in employment, they should contact the local EEO Office. They will receive attention without coercion or reprisal. Employees should present their EEO complaint to an Equal Employment Opportunity Manager. Their complaint will be impartially and expeditiously investigated and resolved.

► Holidays

Full time employees who have appointments of more than 90 days, or who have been employed on one or more continuous appointments, the total of which exceeds 90 days, are entitled to be excused from duty and paid for official U.S.

holidays. If such employees are ordered to perform work on the holiday, they are entitled to be paid holiday pay for the time worked.

Part-time employees who have appointments of more than 90 days, or who have been employed on one or more continuous appointments, the total of which exceeds 90 days, are entitled to be excused from duty and paid for the number of hours of their regular scheduled tour of duty which falls on an official U.S. holiday.

Intermittent employees are not entitled to holiday pay. They are paid only for the time actually worked at straight time rates.

► **Incentive Awards**

The purpose of the Army Incentive Awards Program is to foster mission accomplishment by recognizing excellence of both military and civilian members of the force and motivating them to high levels of performance and service. There are two categories of recognition: monetary and honorary.

Monetary awards include awards for outstanding performance or accomplishment such as Special Act or Service Awards, On-the-Spot Cash Awards, Time Off Awards, or Quality Step Increase.

Honorary awards recognize employees who have established a pattern of excellence and achievement. Such awards include the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service, Army Commendation Medal, Commander's Award for Civilian Service, Meritorious Service Medal, and Superior Civilian Service Award.

An Incentive Award is not an entitlement and should only be granted to employees who meet the criteria and whose accomplishments fully deserve recognition. Eligibility requirements for awards vary depending on the type of award.

For more information on the Army Awards Program, employees should talk with their supervisor or contact their servicing Human Resource Specialist at the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center. Employees may view a copy of the awards regulation, Army Regulation 672-20, at www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil under Management Tools, Awards.

► **Job Description**

The official written statement describing the major duties, responsibilities, and supervisory relationships assigned to a position is called a position description (PD).

The grade and title of the position are determined by comparing the major duties performed and the level of responsibilities assigned to the position with a

classification standard issued by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management and/or standards/guidelines issued by higher headquarters (DOD, DA, MACOM, etc.). The rate of pay is based on the grade level assigned to the position (although volume of work is a contributing factor to the number of employees required to perform the work in an organization, it is not a factor in determining the grade of the position).

DA requires that the supervisor review the PD annually, typically in conjunction with the annual performance appraisal, to ensure that the major duties performed are required in the organization, correctly described, and properly graded. It is very important that the work an employee does on a regular and recurring basis is properly identified in the PD. If an employee is performing duties not listed on the PD, let the supervisor know immediately. Do not wait for the annual review.

A copy of the PD should accompany the Standard Form (SF) 50, the official notification of personnel action, assigning the employee to the position as well as any SF 50 resulting in a change to the position (promotion, change to lower grade, reassignment). If an employee does not have a copy of the position description, one is available at the FASCLASS website at <http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil> (click on "General FASCLASS Access" and then "FASCLASS" , "Search Position Data" on the gray menu bar of the FASCLASS site). Once at the search screen, click in blank box next to "PD#", type the PD number and then either hit enter or click on "Search". The PD number can be found in block 15 of an employee's most recent SF 50 - the first set of numbers under the Position Title.

► **Leave Entitlements**

Annual Leave is earned and credited on a biweekly basis at the rate of 4, 6, or 8 hours per pay period, depending on the total amount of creditable Federal service an employee has, including creditable military service, as indicated in the table below. Individuals with prior military service, should be sure to submit copies of their DD-214s (Certificate of Discharge) covering each period of service to ensure credit for all eligible periods of service. Retired military members must submit the SF 813 (Verification of Military Retiree's Service – Non-Wartime Campaigns/Expeditions), included with the inprocessing forms, to obtain the covered periods of military service, which are creditable.

| ANNUAL LEAVE ACCRUAL RATE | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Years of Service | Earns Per Pay Period | Total Per Year |
| 0-2 | 4 hours | 13 workdays |
| 3-14 | 6 hours | 20 workdays |
| 15+ | 8 hours | 26 workdays |

Temporary employees who have appointments of less than 90 days are not entitled to annual leave.

Part-time employees earn leave on a pro-rated basis. During the first three years, they earn one hour of leave for every 20 hours in a pay status. Between their third and fifteenth year, they earn one hour of leave for every 13 hours in a pay status, and after their fifteenth year, they earn one hour of leave for every ten hours in a pay status.

Intermittent employees do not earn annual leave.

Annual leave can be used in 15-minute increments and must be approved in advance by the supervisor. Annual leave may be used for vacations, personal business, emergency leave, staying home with a sick family member (see **Sick Leave** below), etc.

There is a maximum limit to the number of annual leave hours an employee may accumulate and carry over from one year to the next: 240 hours (employees hired locally) or 360 hours (primarily employees recruited from CONUS).

If employees have hours of annual leave accumulated in excess of these limits and they fail to use it before the end of the leave year, they will forfeit the excess hours unless an authorized exception is granted.

Sick Leave is earned at the rate of 4 hours per pay period or 13 workdays per year, regardless of an employee's number of years of creditable service.

Employees working on a part-time basis with an established tour of duty earn sick leave at the rate of 1 hour for each 20 hours worked.

Intermittent employees are not entitled to sick leave.

Sick leave may be used when the employee:

- Receives medical, dental, or optical examinations or treatment
- Is incapacitated due to physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy, or childbirth
- Provides care for a family member as a result of physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy, childbirth, or medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment
- Makes arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member or attending the funeral of a family member
- Would, as determined by the health authorities having jurisdiction or by a health care provider, jeopardize the health of others by his or her presence on the job because of exposure to a communicable disease

- Must be absent from duty for purposes relating to the adoption of a child, including appointments with adoption agencies, social workers, and attorneys, court proceedings, required travel, and any other activities necessary to allow the adoption to proceed.

Sick leave can be used in 15-minute increments and must be approved by the employee's supervisor. Sick leave for medical appointments should be requested as far in advance as possible. For unscheduled sick leave, the employee must personally (if at all possible) request sick leave from the supervisor; some organizations may deviate from this policy. Employees should confirm the organization's policy with their supervisor. A written doctor's statement may be required when any one period of absence exceeds 3 consecutive workdays. A supervisor who suspects sick leave abuse may require a doctor's statement for any charge to sick leave if the employee has been given written notice of the requirement.

Questions regarding leave for maternity purposes and leave without pay (LWOP) should be directed to the supervisor.

Family and Medical Leave: Under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), most Federal employees are entitled to a total of up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for the following purposes:

- The birth of a son or daughter of the employee and the care of such son or daughter
- The placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care
- The care of spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee who has a serious health condition
- A serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her positions

Under certain conditions, an employee may use the 12 weeks of FMLA leave intermittently. An employee may elect to substitute annual leave and/or sick leave, consistent with current laws and OPM regulations for using annual and sick leave, for any unpaid leave under the FMLA. An employee must provide notice of his or her intent to take family and medical leave at least 30 days before leave is to begin or, in emergencies, as soon as is feasible. An agency may request medical certification for FMLA leave taken to care for an employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition or for the serious health condition of the employee.

FMLA leave is in addition to other paid time off available to an employee. The amount of sick leave that may be used to care for a family member is limited (see Sick Leave to Care For a Family Member below).

Sick Leave To Care For A Family Member: Most Federal employees may use a total of up to 104 hours (13 workdays) of sick leave each leave year to:

- Provide care for a family member who is incapacitated as a result of physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy, or childbirth
- Provide care for a family member as a result of medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment
- Make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member or attend the funeral of a family member

A covered full-time employee may use 40 hours (5 workdays) of sick leave each leave year for these purposes. An additional 64 hours (8 workdays) of sick leave may be used each year if the employee maintains a balance of at least 80 hours of sick leave in his or her account. Part-time employees and employees with uncommon tours of duty are also covered. The amount of sick leave permitted for family care and bereavement is pro-rated in proportion to the average number of hours of work in the employee's scheduled tour of duty each week.

► **Long Term Care Insurance**

This insurance helps pay for long term care services such as home care in a nursing home or assisted living facility. Long term care insurance provided under the Federal Program provides employees reimbursement for costs of care when they are unable to perform at least two activities of daily living for an expected period of at least 90 days or when they need constant supervision due to a severe cognitive impairment. The Federal Program will provide reimbursement based on the benefit options and amounts employees are approved for.

Eligibility: Federal employees in positions that convey eligibility for the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (whether or not they are actually enrolled in FEHB).

Coverage Choices: In deciding the type and amount of long term care insurance coverage to apply for, employees have a number of choices. The decision should be based on such factors as:

- Long term care costs in the area where an employee may need services
- How much an employee can pay out-of-pocket for long term care
- How much an employee can afford to pay for long term care insurance premiums

Employees who decide that long term care insurance is the right choice for them will have the option to select one of the four pre-packaged plans available under the Federal Program or to customize their own plan.

Types of Plans: The Federal Program was designed to make it as easy as possible for employees to select coverage that's right for them. There are four pre-packaged plans.

The Facilities 100 plan covers care in nursing homes, assisted living, and hospice facilities and respite services provided in a facility.

The Comprehensive 100, 150, and 150+ plans cover everything in the Facilities 100 plan, plus home care, adult day care, respite services at home, and home hospice care.

Employees may wish to customize their own plan by mixing and matching the available benefit options.

Effective Date: The original effective date is the date that an employee's coverage is scheduled to go into effect. However, it may not become effective on that date. Employees and members of the uniformed services must be actively at work on that date, otherwise coverage will not become effective on that date. Also, an employee's coverage may not become effective if the employee leaves the eligible group before that date.

If an employee applies and the application is approved, the employee will receive a schedule of benefits that will list an original effective date (first day of the month following approval of the application).

Premiums: The amount of the premium is based on the coverage options the employee is approved for and the employee's age. The premiums will not change because an employee gets older or the employee's health changes after the coverage becomes effective.

Employees can use the premium calculator at https://www.ltcfeds.com/NASApp/ltc/do/assessing_your_needs/ratecalc to find out the premiums for their age and the benefit options they choose. The calculator allows employees to model up to four options and compare the benefits and costs of each on the same screen.

Coverage Application: Employees eligible to apply can go to <http://www.ltcfeds.com/> to obtain application information.

For Additional Information visit the following websites:
<http://www.opm.gov/insure/ltc/index.htm> or <http://www.ltcfeds.com/>

The Long Term Care program is sponsored by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), however, neither the Army Benefits Center – Civilian (ABC-C) nor the Civilian Personnel Advisory Centers administer any aspect of

this program. All questions must be directed to the contacts provided on their web site: <http://www.ltcfeds.com/>.

► **Pay and Allowances**

Dual Compensation

Employees are not entitled to receive pay from more than one Federal position for more than an aggregate of 40 hours of work in one calendar week. There is no restriction on the number of appointments an employee may hold--only upon the number of hours for which they are paid. An employee may be given more than one simultaneous part-time or intermittent appointment (appropriated or non-appropriated fund) as long as pay is not received for more than 40 hours in one calendar week (Sunday through Saturday). If employment is in a non-appropriated fund position, an employee may not serve concurrently in two part-time non-appropriated fund positions. Individuals violating the Dual Compensation Status (Section 5533, Title 5 USC) may become indebted to the U.S. Government. Accordingly the U.S. Government may collect such debts from employees under the provisions of Sec. 5584, Title 5 USC.

Individuals should notify their Civilian Personnel Advisory Center immediately for advice if their employment status changes from appropriated to non-appropriated fund or vice versa.

Living Quarters Allowance (LQA)

A quarters allowance granted to an eligible employee for the annual cost of suitable, adequate, living quarters for the employee and his/her family. The LQA rates are designed to cover substantially all of the average employee's costs for rent, heat, light, fuel, gas, electricity, water, taxes levied by the local government and required by law or custom to be paid by the lessee, insurance required by local law to be paid by the lessee, and agent's fee required by law or custom to be paid by lessee. For further information see PART IV, Employee Employment Guides, Section B, Pay and Allowances, Living Quarters Allowance (LQA).

Paychecks

The Charleston office of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) pays most employees serviced by the Army in Europe CPOC. However, there are a few employees who are paid from other Finance Offices in the CONUS. Nearly all payments made to employees will be paid through the DFAS payroll office to include basic salary, post differentials and allowances, LQA, and TQSA. Most payments must also be made via Electronic Funds Transfer to the employee's bank account.

Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit of paychecks to designated U.S. financial institutions) is a condition of employment. Employees must designate, by completion of SF 1199A, Authorization for Deposit of Federal

Recurring Payments, an approved U.S. financial institution to which their salary will be directly deposited by DFAS Charleston, SC. The financial institution may be in the United States or it may be a U.S. banking facility in the overseas area. A completed SF-1199A must be submitted to the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center during inprocessing. Failure to do so may result in delay in receipt of salary and allowances. In lieu of submitting the SF1199A, current Federal employees may access myPay at <https://emss.dfas.mil/mypay.asp> to update their financial institution online. The employee must have an established PIN to access myPay prior to reporting for inprocessing at the overseas duty station.

Post Allowance

Post Allowance is paid to compensate in part for the higher price of many goods and services in overseas areas. It is based on the employee's salary, work schedule, number of dependents, and the employee's duty station location. Changes in exchange rates also raise or lower the post allowance since exchange rates affect the cost of goods and services bought on the economy. Post allowance is not taxable.

The payment of post allowance is governed by the following regulations:

Department of State Standardized Regulation (DSSR)
Department of Defense Regulation 1400.25-M, Subchapter 1250.

To be eligible for post allowance an employee must be a U.S. Citizen officially assigned at a foreign post and employed on a full time basis. **Part-time, intermittent, and family member summer hire employees are not eligible.**

Eligible employees must submit a Foreign Allowances Application Grant and Report, SF 1190, to claim Post Allowance. The amount to be paid will be primarily based upon the data contained on the SF 1190.

The post allowance rates are set by the Department of State and are periodically adjusted to reflect changes in the economic conditions of the foreign post. Revisions to the rates made by the Department of State are automatically processed by the DFAS. There are however, other factors which effect the total amount of post allowance entitlement and require submission of a new SF 1190 to report the change. These include:

- Change in number of family members by:
 - (1) marriage or divorce
 - (2) birth or death of a family member(s)
 - (3) arrival or permanent departure of family member(s)
 - (4) departure of employee and/or family member(s) on leave orders (i.e. Renewal Travel Orders)

- (5) temporary absences of 31 days or more from post of employee and/or family member(s)
- (6) family member(s) other than spouse reaching age 21 (to include full time students) or
- (7) family member(s) no longer residing with the sponsor
- Family member(s) started or stopped receiving post allowance or cost of living allowance (COLA) in their own right as a result of employment with the U.S. government
- Change in post of assignment
- Receipt of Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance (TQSA) (post allowance requires termination in this case)
- Change in command sponsor sponsorship
- Change in employment status from part-time or intermittent to a full time employee

Post Differential and/or Danger Pay Allowance

These allowances are atypical in the sense that normally no one assigned in Germany, Italy, Belgium, England, or the Netherlands receives either allowance except for extended temporary duty (TDY) or Temporary Change of Station (TCS) to areas for which these payments are authorized. These payments are subject to Federal income tax. Additional information regarding entitlements for deployed individuals may be found under Contingency Guidance at the following website:

http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil/deployedciv/deploy_default.htm.

Within-Grade Increase (WGI)

A within-grade-increase (WGI) is an increase in the employee's rate of basic pay by advancement from one step of his/her grade to the next after meeting requirements for length of service and satisfactory performance.

Personnel actions affecting WGIs are generated automatically in the Civilian Personnel Operations Center unless the supervisor has identified a performance problem with the employee, in which case it may be postponed or withheld.

Following are the waiting periods and the affects of nonpay status on waiting periods for General Schedule and Federal Wage System employees.

| Waiting Period for General Schedule (GS) (full-time) Employees with a Prearranged Regularly Scheduled Tour of Duty | |
|---|--------------------|
| For advancement to steps 2, 3, and 4 | 52 calendar weeks |
| For advancement to steps 5, 6, and 7 | 104 calendar weeks |
| For advancement to steps 8, 9, and 10 | 156 calendar weeks |

| Waiting Period for Federal Wage System (WG/WS) (full-time) Employees with a Prearranged Regularly Scheduled Tour of Duty | |
|--|--|
| For advancement to step 2 | 26 calendar weeks in step 1 |
| For advancement to step 3 | 78 calendar weeks in step 2 |
| For advancement to step 4 and 5 | 104 calendar weeks in step 3 and 4, respectively |

| Waiting Period for Federal Wage System (WG/WL/WS) Employees without a Prearranged Regularly Scheduled Tour of Duty (Intermittent) | |
|---|--|
| Note: Any day on which a part-time period of service is performed constitutes a full day. | |
| For advancement to step 2 | 130 days of creditable service in a pay status in rate 1 over a period of no less than 26 calendar weeks |
| For advancement to step 3 | 390 days of creditable service in a pay status in rate 2 over a period of no less than 78 calendar weeks |
| For advancement to step 4 | 520 days of creditable service in a pay status in rate 3 over a period of no less than 104 weeks |
| For advancement to step 5 | 520 days of creditable service in a pay status in rate 4 over a period of no less than 104 weeks |

► **Performance Evaluation**

A performance plan should be presented to an employee for review and signature within 30 calendar days after reporting to the new job. In Department of Army the performance plan is also known as either a Counseling Checklist in the Base System or a Support Form in the Senior System. The performance plan consists of responsibilities for the Base System and objectives for the Senior System. The responsibilities and objectives are also known as standards. The standards are the measure or yardstick to determine how well the employee performed each responsibility or objective. The supervisor will re-certify the plan, or establish a new plan, on an annual basis within 30 days of the beginning of each new rating period.

Performance Appraisal: The objectives of the Total Army Performance Evaluation System (TAPES) are:

1. Communicating organizational goals and priorities as well as Army values and ethics to employees
2. Establishing individual expectations for performance that reflect organizational goals and priorities
3. Facilitating frequent discussion among the Ratee (employee) and the rating chain about performance, expectations, professional development, and DA values and ethics
4. Providing an environment where all understand that they are important members of the Army Team – in which they are recognized for their achievements, counseled and assisted in areas in which they can improve, encouraged to take responsibility for doing things better and to support team endeavors, and challenged to develop professionally and to perform at their full potential
5. Requiring annual written individual performance evaluations that provide supervisors and managers with the tools for:
 - (a) Systematic assessment of performance results achieved to make sound plans and decisions concerning compensation, training, rewards, reassignments, promotions, reductions in grade retention, reductions in force, and removal
 - (b) A sound and continuing basis for effective supervisor-subordinate partnerships in pursuit of common goals

Annual Rating: An employee must have the opportunity to work under an approved performance plan for 120 days before receiving a rating. The first rating cycle may be less or more than one year in order to accommodate the employee into the appropriate cycle. An early annual appraisal should be prepared for an employee if either the employee or the supervisor departs with 120 days or less left in the rating period. Also, if the employee qualifies for Executive Order 12721 (Noncompetitive Appointment of Former Overseas Employees), the employee should receive an annual rating on the day the employee departs the position, regardless of how long the employee has been working under the standards or how long it has been since the employee's last rating.

| USAREUR Annual Rating Cycles | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Grade Range | Rating Cycle |
| GS/GM/WS 13 and above | 1 July – 30 June |
| GS/WS 9-12 | 1 November – 31 October |
| GS/WS 6-8, WG-6 and above, and all WL | 1 February – 31 January |
| GS/WS/WG 1-5 | 1 May – 30 April |

Special Rating: A special rating will be prepared if the employee is reassigned to another position or the supervisor leaves with more than 120 days left in the rating cycle. Also, a performance plan and special appraisal will be prepared if the employee is detailed to another position for 120 days or more.

Five different overall performance rating levels exist in the TAPES system:

- Successful Level 1
- Successful Level 2
- Successful Level 3
- Fair
- Unsuccessful

The criteria used to determine the overall performance rating depends on factors such as the number of "excellence," "success," "needs improvement," and "fail" ratings received per standard/objective, whether the employee is covered by the Base Level or Senior Level System, and whether the employee is in a supervisory or non-supervisory position.

Midpoint Progress Review: The supervisor is required to hold a midpoint progress review with the employee to discuss performance. This review is held at the midpoint of the designated rating period.

| MIDPOINT REVIEW DATES | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Grade Range | Rating Cycle | Midpoint Review |
| GS/GM/WS 13 and above | 1 Jul – 30 Jun | 1 Jan |
| GS/WS 9-12 | 1 Nov – 31 Oct | 1 May |
| GS/WS 6-8, WG-6 and above and all WL | 1 Feb – 31 Jan | 1 Aug |
| GS/WS/WG 1-5 | 1 May – 30 Apr | 1 Nov |

Employees may view a copy of AR 690-400, Chapter 4302, Total Army Performance Evaluation System at <http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil> under Management Tools, Employee Performance.

► Personal Debts and Complaints

Employees are expected to pay bills promptly and to liquidate all debts accordingly.

The Government does not act as a collection agency. However, any debt complaint against an employee will be reported to the supervisor and will require an explanation in writing as to the reasons of nonpayment.

The Government will not tolerate actions of irresponsibility, gross carelessness, neglect, dishonesty, or evasion in financial dealings. Employees of the Department of the Army are expected to discharge their financial obligations in a manner that will avoid bringing discredit upon themselves and the U.S. Government. Willful failure to honor government debts, including tax delinquencies and claims based on court judgments, or to make and adhere to satisfactory arrangements for settlement will constitute grounds for official reprimand, suspension, or removal.

► Safety - Responsibility - Injury

It is every employee's responsibility to observe safe work habits. Report unsafe working conditions to the supervisor immediately. When an employee sustains a traumatic injury in the performance of duty, the employee and the supervisor need to complete an on-line Form CA-1 as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days from the date of injury. Access to the CA-1 is found at <http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil> under Management Tools, On the Job Injuries, Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) System. If the employee is incapacitated, someone may take this action on the employee's behalf, including a family member, union official, representative, or agency official. The form must contain the original signature of the person giving notice. For more information concerning the Federal Employees Compensation Act:

- Contact the supervisor
- Review What to do When Injured at Work (Employee Information) at <http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil/policy/docs/owcp-empl-info.pdf>
- Review Work Related Injuries (Supervisor Responsibilities) at <http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil/policy/docs/owcp-supv-resp.pdf>
- Review Medical Treatment Policy for Federal Employees – Work-Related Disease, Illness, or Injury at <https://www.aeaim.hqusareur.army.mil/library/ltr/pdf/ul2004.007.pdf>
- Review Federal Employees Compensation Act Handbook at <http://www.dol.gov/esaregs/compliance/owcp/feca810m.htm>

► Standards of Conduct

Each Department of Defense Agency has a regulation that prescribes Standards of Conduct relating to possible conflicts between private interests and official duties. Violations of these standards may be cause for job related disciplinary action that could be in addition to any penalty provided by law. All U. S. citizen employees must be familiar with the provisions of these regulations. The supervisor must thoroughly brief employees on the contents of the regulations within 60 days of their entrance on duty and semiannually thereafter.

► Temporary Appointment

Intermittent, not-to-exceed (NTE):

- Individuals on a temporary, intermittent appointment may be terminated at any time prior to the NTE date should circumstances warrant (i.e., lack of funds or work, etc.).

- Individuals on temporary appointment are not considered as merit promotion candidates for permanent positions. To be eligible to apply for permanent positions, other than through the Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) announcement, individuals on temporary appointments must have personal civil service status, i.e., reinstatement eligibility, or eligibility under a special appointment authority, i.e., Veteran's Recruitment Authority, Family Member Appointment, etc.
- Acceptance of a temporary position will not affect spouse preference for permanent positions if the appointment is less than one (1) year.
- A temporary appointment does not entitle individuals to enroll in the Federal Employees' Health Benefit (FEHB) or Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) programs or provide coverage under any federal retirement system. Individuals on temporary appointments are covered under Social Security (FICA).
- Individuals on intermittent appointments are ineligible for leave accumulation.

Full/Part Time, not-to-exceed (NTE):

- Individuals on a full-time or part-time temporary appointment may be terminated at any time prior to the NTE date should circumstances warrant (i.e., lack of funds or work, etc.).
- Individuals on temporary appointment are not considered as merit promotion candidates for permanent positions. To be eligible to apply for permanent positions, other than through the Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) announcement, individuals on temporary appointments must have personal civil service status, i.e., reinstatement eligibility, or eligibility under a special appointment authority, i.e., Veteran's Recruitment Authority, Family Member Appointment, etc.
- Acceptance of a temporary position will not affect spouse preference for permanent positions if the appointment is less than one (1) year.
- A temporary appointment does not entitle individuals to enroll in the Federal Employees' Health Benefit (FEHB) or Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) programs or provide coverage under any federal retirement system. Individuals on temporary appointments are covered under Social Security (FICA). Individuals may, after one year of continuous temporary service, become eligible to elect FEHB but will be required to pay the full cost of such coverage.
- Individuals on full-time/part-time temporary appointments are not eligible for accrual of annual leave unless their appointments are for more than 90 days. However, should their appointments be extended beyond 90 days, they will accrue leave retroactively to the date of their initial appointment. Sick leave accrual begins on the date of the initial appointment.

► **Tour of Duty -- Hours of Work**

Full-Time: A basic workweek for most full-time employees is normally 40 hours of scheduled work extending over no more than six of seven consecutive days. There are variations to the 40 hour workweek for employees whose tours cannot be regularly scheduled or involve standby time. Some organizations provide their employees with the option of flexible or compressed work schedules.

Part-Time: A part-time tour of duty means regularly scheduled work from 16 to 32 hours per week.

Intermittent: An intermittent work schedule requires employees to work on an irregular basis for which there is no prearranged tour of duty.

On-Call: An on-call schedule is used when the work is sporadic or unpredictable. Such a schedule normally has an expected cumulative service period of at least six months in a pay status each year.

Seasonal: A seasonal work schedule is used when an employee works on an annually recurring basis for less than 12 months (2087 hours) each year. An example is an employee responsible for snow removal or seasonal grounds maintenance.

► **Training Information**

The U.S. Army has many resident and correspondence training courses. Employees who desire training to improve current performance or develop new job skills should contact their supervisor for information and assistance on enrolling in courses.

For information about training courses provided by the Civilian Personnel Operations Center, see Training Opportunities at <http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil>.

PART IV EMPLOYEE EMPLOYMENT GUIDES

**Section B Additional Employment Information Specific to Employees
Hired From the Continental United States (CONUS)**

Leave

Pay and Allowances

- Foreign Transfer Allowance (FTA)
- Living Quarters Allowance (LQA)
- Miscellaneous Expense Allowance
- Salary Advances
- Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance (TQSA)

Return to the CONUS and Placement Options

Travel

- Renewal Agreement Travel (RAT)
- Student Educational Travel

► Leave

Most Federal employees earn two types of leave - Annual Leave and Sick Leave.

Current Federal employees need to bring their last Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) from their former duty station to help expedite the transfer of their current leave balances. (Current DOD employees may obtain online copies of their LES using myPay at the following website: <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>.) The SF1150 (Record of Leave Data) is sent from the old pay office to the old civilian personnel office for transmittal with the Official Personnel File (OPF). This is not always a quick process; it may delay the transfer of accrued leave that an employee may be wanting to take while getting settled in at the new duty station.

Individuals hired from the United States are eligible for two special features of overseas employment, HOME LEAVE AND 45-DAY ANNUAL LEAVE ACCUMULATION.

Home leave is special leave earned in one-day increments (rather than hours like annual or sick leave). In most of Europe, eligible employees earn home leave at the rate of 5 days per year.

An employee must have served continuously at least one 24-month period at an overseas post before home leave can be used. Home leave must be taken in the U.S. or its territories or possessions. Home leave may only be used if the employee will return to duty at an overseas area. In other words, home leave can't be taken in conjunction with a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) back to the U.S., unless the employee is under a mobility agreement. Home leave can be taken in conjunction with a PCS from one overseas area to another overseas area, if other service requirements are met. When taking home leave, the travel time to and from the employee's home of record or other single authorized point is not chargeable to leave. This entitlement is limited to one leave period for each overseas tour in accordance with USAREUR Supplemental 1 to AR 690-300.301. The home leave balance shows on the employee's Leave and Earnings Statement. The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) can provide information on Home Leave.

45-Day Annual Leave Accumulation allows certain overseas employees (usually those hired from the CONUS) to carry leave over from one year to the next for up to 45 days (360 hours) before it must be used or lost as opposed to the standard 30 days (240 hours) in the CONUS. Upon return to CONUS, the 360 hours may be kept as long as they are not used. Should the amount of leave drop below 360 hours, the maximum amount of allowed leave becomes either the new amount held or the standard 240, whichever is higher.

► Pay and Allowances

To read more about the various overseas allowances other than what is discussed in general terms below, go to the Reference Library at <http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil> for links to the governing sites.

Foreign Transfer Allowance (FTA)

FTA may be authorized for the employee and accompanying dependents for up to 10 days before final departure from a duty station in the States. Allowable expenses include temporary lodgings, meals, fees, tips incident to meals and lodging, and laundry. Employees should check the web site <http://www.dtic.mil/perdiem/jftr-b.html> for the per diem amounts. Keep receipts for meals, lodging, and laundry/dry cleaning. There is no authorization to reimburse any local transportation costs; keep this in mind when deciding when to ship a car.

Living Quarters Allowance (LQA)

With few exceptions, employees recruited from CONUS are required to live on the economy and may be entitled to receive a living quarters allowance. LQA is in addition to other allowances and, in most instances, covers most of the costs of housing, heat, electricity, water, and sewer service. The maximum allowable rates depend on the location of the duty assignment, the grade of the employee, and how many dependents are living with the employee.

It is important for individuals to know that LQA is a reimbursement, based on actual expenses. It is adjusted periodically and automatically for changes in monetary exchange rates. After the first year employees are required to submit a reconciliation along with the actual receipts for their utility expenses. If there are major changes to expenses during the year, the employee may also ask for an adjustment at that time to avoid under-or over-payments. LQA is not taxable.

Employees need to be aware that LQA records are subject to audit at any time to determine if reimbursements match actual expenses. To avoid under-or over-payments, it is incumbent on the employee to maintain accurate records of expenses and periodically review their Leave and Earning Statements. Unexplained changes to LQA reimbursements should be reported immediately to the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC). When it is determined that reimbursements exceed actual expenses the employee will receive a debt notification from DFAS. Alternatively, when actual expenses exceed reimbursements, an employee will receive payment for the difference.

It is also important that employees maintain their records after they leave their overseas assignment. As stated above, LQA audits, similar to other Government financial audits, may occur anytime.

Questions about LQA eligibility or expenses should be addressed to the gaining CPAC.

Selected individuals will complete a Questionnaire for Living Quarters Allowance (LQA) which will be used to determine their eligibility to receive this allowance. Firm job offers will include information about selected individuals' entitlement to this allowance.

In accordance with Army in Europe Regulation 690-500.592, Civilian Personnel Living Quarters Allowance (<https://www.aeaim.hqusareur.army.mil/library/reg/aer690-500.592.htm>), which became effective 1 July 2003: LQA will be granted for the following types of appropriated employees:

(1) U.S. hires in grades GS-09 (or equivalent), WG-11, WL-09, WS-05, and above. This includes U.S. hires selected for entry-level positions with target grades GS-09 and above. Grade restrictions do not apply to applicants selected for career program positions below the GS-09 (or equivalent) level.

(2) Local-hire appointments to positions in grades GS-09 (or equivalent), WG-11, WL-09, WS-05, and above. This includes local hires selected for entry-level positions with target grades of GS-09 and above. Grade restrictions do not apply to applicants selected for career-program positions below the GS-09 (or equivalent) level. Both of the following eligibility criteria must be met:

(a) Before being appointed, the employee was recruited in the United States by the U.S. Government, including its Armed Forces; a U.S. firm, organization, or interest; or an international organization in which the U.S. Government takes part.

(b) The employee has been in substantially continuous employment by one of the employers in (a) above under conditions that provided for the employee's return transportation to the United States.

NOTE: Former military members and civilian employees will be considered to have "substantially continuous employment" for up to 1 year after the date of separation; or until the initial transportation entitlement is lost or extended; or until the retired, separated member or employee uses a substantial portion (50 percent or more) of the entitlement for Government transportation back to the United States, whichever occurs first. Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) employment will be considered in determining substantially continuous employment.

(3) Federal civilian employees (APF or NAF) selected for positions in grades GS-09 (or equivalent), WG-11, WL-09, WS-05, and above who meet all of the following criteria:

(a) Are transferring to the European region from another overseas Government activity or agency without a break in service. Grade restrictions do not apply to Federal civilian employees transferring to positions identified as hard-to-fill.

(b) Meet basic eligibility criteria of DSSR, section 031.11 or 031.12.

(c) Were already receiving or eligible to receive LQA at the time of selection.

NOTE: This also applies to Federal civilian employees within the same Government activity or agency in the European theater who are reassigned to USAREUR-serviced positions in grades GS-09 (or equivalent), WG-11, WL-09, WS-05, and above. Grade restrictions do not apply to incumbents of career program positions below the GS-09 (or equivalent) level.

Other Authorizations. LQA will be granted for employees selected for identified hard-to-fill positions when they are either of the following:

(1) Local hires in grades GS-08 (or equivalent), WG-10, WL-08, WS-04, or below.

(2) Hired from the United States for identified hard-to-fill positions at any grade and do not meet the 1-year residency requirement. These employees must have established permanent residency in the United States. Eligibility determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

NOTE: The basic eligibility criteria of DSSR (<http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/c1843.htm>), Section 031.11 or 031.12, must be met. If an employee is receiving LQA solely based on occupying a hard-to-fill position, and leaves the hard-to-fill position, the employee's LQA will continue.

Allowable Expenses for LQA: (NOTE: Reimbursement of living quarters allowance will not exceed the authorized **annual cost of rent and utilities or the maximum allowance rate** set by the Department of State, **which ever is the lesser amount**. DFAS uses the employee's authorized foreign currency expenses to convert the amount to U.S. dollars using the exchange rate provided by their office. DFAS also automatically adjusts LQA payments

each pay period when changes occur in Department of State maximum rates or foreign currency conversion rates. DFAS makes LQA allowance payments to employees in U.S. dollars.)

All Quarters: utility costs such as gas, water, electricity, sewage costs for used water, heating oil, coal, firewood, and basic furniture rental provided that the furniture is not rented from the landlord. Basic furniture rental does not include pianos, other musical instruments, radios, or television sets, etc., nor does it include furniture and appliances that may be provided by the government.

As-Needed Utility Costs:

There are some utility costs that occur on an as-needed basis. These include items such as heating or cooking oil, wood, gas (propane/butane), coal, etc. These items are purchased as needed by the employee. The employee must then submit a claim for reimbursement. This may be submitted in conjunction with a LQA reconciliation request, or if the reconciliation has been completed, they may be submitted as they occur. The employee can also choose to retain the receipts and submit a single request for reimbursement.

Generally, expenses for ‘as needed’ utility costs are not reimbursed in a lump sum. As-needed costs are added to other utility expenses and reimbursed in even amounts each pay period throughout the pay year on a pro-rated basis. Employees must submit bills/receipts for all as needed utility costs each year but no later than 31 January of the following year of the purchase.

Reimbursements will be included in employees’ biweekly LQA allowance, pro-rated over the year’s pay periods; a separate lump sum payment will not be issued (see Example 1). A lump-sum reimbursement would only be paid if the purchase had been made in the previous year (see Examples 2a and 2b).

Example 1: (The as-need utility purchase is made and claim is submitted in the same calendar year.)

Employee purchases oil at a cost of 390 Euros in Feb 2003 and submits the receipt and a Foreign Allowances Application Grant and Report (SF-1190) for reimbursement.

The actual cost of 390 Euros is prorated for 26 pay periods. Employee receives an increase in LQA reimbursement each pay period equal to the prorated amount.

Example 2a: (The as-needed utility purchase is made in the year prior to the year the claim is submitted. Employee elects to increase estimated utility costs for the current year.)

Employee purchases oil at a cost of 390 Euros in Nov 2003. Employee submits receipt and a SF-1190 for reimbursement in January 2004.

Because the purchase was made in the previous year, the employee is paid the full 390 Euros reimbursement in a single pay period.

In addition, the employee elects* to have the amount of 390 Euros prorated over the year 2004 as an estimated amount of additional utility costs for the current year. The 390 Euros would be pro-rated and paid over the 26 pay periods. In this case, the employee may become indebted if there are no as-needed utility purchases during 2004.

*Employee indicates in the remarks block of the SF-1190 submitted for reimbursement, for example, "Request reimbursement for the as-needed utility expense attached. Further, request that the amount of this expense be added to my estimated utility expenses for the current year."

Example 2b: (The as-needed utility purchase is made in the year prior to the year the claim is submitted. Employee elects not to increase estimated utility costs for the current year.)

Employee purchases oil at a cost of 450 Euros in Dec 2003. Employee submits the receipt and SF 1190 for reimbursement in Jan 2004.

Because the purchase was made in the previous year, the employee is paid the full 450 Euros reimbursement in a single pay period.

The employee elects* not to have the 450 Euros pro-rated over the current year as an increased estimated utility cost. Employee will submit receipt and SF-1190 for oil after the next purchase.

*Employee indicates in the remarks block of the SF-1190 submitted for reimbursement, for example, "Request reimbursement for the as-needed utility expense attached. **Do not** add this expense to my estimated utility expenses for the current year. I will submit claims for as-needed expenses as they occur."

Rental Quarters: rent; garage for one vehicle if one is not included in rented property; costs for cleaning, heating and lighting common areas in apartment buildings; garbage or trash disposal; and taxes and insurance required by local law or custom.

Personally Owned Quarters: When the employee, or the spouse, or both own quarters occupied by an employee, an amount up to 10 percent of the original purchase price* (converted to U.S. dollars at the original exchange rate) of such quarters shall be considered the annual rate of his/her estimated

expenses for rent. Only the expenses for heat, light, fuel, (including gas and electricity), water, garbage and trash disposal, and in rare cases land rent, may be added to the computed "rent" cost to calculate the amount of the employee's quarters allowance.

The amount of the rental portion of the allowance (up to 10 percent of the purchase price) is limited to a period, not to exceed ten years, at which time the employee will be entitled only to above utility expenses, garbage and trash disposal, and land rent.

*This is limited to the maximum amount of the LQA allowance for which the employee is eligible. There will be no reimbursement for the other allowable expenses should the "rent" meet or exceed the maximum allowance. Should the employee meet the 10-year limitation period for the rental portion of the allowance, entitlement for the utility expenses, as described above, would continue.

Cost of the following are not to be included in LQA entitlements:

- Concierge or notary's fees
- Agent's fee except if mandatory by law or custom and if lessee payment of fee is a condition of obtaining lease
- Telephone installation or maintenance
- Deterioration of property or furniture
- Servant's wages or maintenance
- Tips
- Cleaning or redecorating
- Storage
- Garden or lawn service
- Chimney Sweep/Heater Maintenance
- Renovation fees
- Servant's quarters, unless considered part of the same property with the living quarters
- Any other extraneous expenses not directly related to rent as such

Miscellaneous Expense Allowance

The Miscellaneous Expense Allowance (MEA) helps to defray various contingent costs associated with discontinuing a residence at one location and establishing a residence at a new location. Check with the gaining CPAC for information on the costs that are reimbursed by the MEA. Examples of costs that may be covered include: disconnecting and connecting appliances; cutting and fitting of rugs, draperies, and curtains moved from one residence quarters to another; and use taxes and rental agent fees.

Transferring employees (those currently working for the U.S. Government) are entitled to the Miscellaneous Expense Allowance under the Joint Travel Regulations, Volume II, Chapter 9004, Paragraph C. New appointees

performing first duty travel to a foreign duty station are entitled to the MEA under the Department of State Standardized Regulation, Section 240, 242.1.

| The following amounts may be granted to employees who are eligible for reimbursement of miscellaneous expenses | | |
|--|--|--|
| | Without Family | With Family |
| Submission without receipts/ itemizing | \$500 or the equivalent of one week's basic salary, whichever is the lesser amount. | \$1000 or the equivalent of two weeks' basic salary, whichever is the lesser amount. |
| Submission with receipts/ itemizing | An amount based on actual allowable itemized expenditures not to exceed one week's basic salary for the employee or one week's basic salary for an employee at GS-13, step 10, whichever is the lesser amount. | An amount based on actual allowable itemized expenditures not to exceed two week's basic salary for the employee or two weeks' basic salary for an employee at GS-13, step 10, whichever is the lesser amount. |

Transferring employees must use a Travel Voucher or Subvoucher (DD Form 1351-2) and submit claims to the local travel pay office.

New appointees performing first duty travel to a foreign duty station must submit claims to the civilian payroll office through their servicing CPAC using the Standard Form (SF)-1190.

Miscellaneous expense allowance **is not** authorized for employees performing renewal agreement travel unless a PCS is authorized and the employee has discontinued a residence at one location and established a residence at a new location in connection with the PCS.

Salary Advances

In conjunction with a move from CONUS to OCONUS, an employee may be eligible to take one advance of salary (an amount of up to six pay periods). Repayment will start immediately after arriving at the new location. The employee can decide how to pay it back within the limits that all must be paid back within 26 pay periods. The advance is paid through direct deposit like the regular paycheck, not as a cash or check payment on demand. For current employees, the advance may be requested either before leaving CONUS, or after arriving overseas. This allows employees access to money for the initial expenses incurred in moving and in case there is a delay in receiving regular pay. Remember, there is NO Locality Pay in the overseas area. For new hires, the advance cannot be requested until arrival overseas.

This advance is interest free. Remember, there is NO Locality Pay in the overseas area.

Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance (TQSA)

TQSA is authorized for employees hired from CONUS who are eligible for Living Quarters Allowance to help offset the expenses of temporary lodging, meals, and laundry expenses for up to 90 days upon arrival. That is the expected time period that it should take to find a permanent residence. Extensions of up to 60 days may be granted for compelling reasons beyond an employee's control. TQSA advances are only authorized in increments of 30-days. **BE SURE TO KEEP ALL RECEIPTS** for hotels, laundry and/or dry cleaning, as well as, any single meal costing \$75 or more. During inprocessing at the new duty station, the CPAC will provide the appropriate forms that need to be completed for claiming TQSA. TQSA is paid at the new duty location only.

► Return to the CONUS and Placement Options

Employees sign a rotation agreement as a condition of employment when hired from the CONUS. When the time comes for an employee to return to the CONUS, the specific options available at that time will be explained in detail. Placements are usually made in one of three ways:

1. An employee may be selected for another position in the CONUS through normal merit promotion or reassignment action. This is similar to how employees are originally chosen to work OCONUS.
2. The employee may exercise Return Rights. Most current, permanent Army employees hired from the CONUS will have some form of return rights to either the specific position left, the installation, or a geographic area for up to 5 years. The CONUS CPAC should explain these entitlements when an employee prepares to leave the CONUS. They will also be discussed when the employee prepares to return.
3. The employee may be eligible for registration in the DOD Priority Placement Program (PPP), often called the Stopper List. If an employee does not have return rights when the time comes to go home or if the return rights are to a lower grade, the employee will probably be eligible for registration in PPP for jobs back in the CONUS. There are many details about this program that will be explained by the CPAC when the time comes to return to the U.S.

► Travel

Renewal Agreement Travel (RAT)

For personnel assigned to Europe, the initial overseas tour is normally three years. Subsequent, or renewal, tours are up to two years in length. When an employee signs a renewal agreement to stay another tour, the employee may become eligible for RAT travel. Generally, employees hired from the

Continental United States (CONUS) will be eligible for RAT travel. RAT is a free trip back to the CONUS, usually to the location from where they were hired, for the employee and his/her eligible dependents. After signing a renewal agreement, the employee may take the RAT only during a specific timeframe (known as the RAT window). The RAT window for the initial renewal tour runs for a period of up to six months before the start of the new tour, until 12 months before the end of the renewal tour. That end date is important - the employee must take the RAT and return overseas no later than 12 months before the end of the renewal tour. If the employee waits longer the entitlement for RAT is lost, with few exceptions. To start the RAT process once a two-year renewal agreement has been signed, the employee must complete a Request for Travel Orders form. The supervisor signs it, and the Resource Management Office provides the fund cite. After all is completed, the form is submitted to the servicing CPAC. The CPAC will use this information to prepare the Travel Orders. Travel arrangements must be made through the local military Transportation Office.

RAT must be to the U.S. and is charged to either home leave or annual leave, depending on the employee's leave situation. Note: Employees who are authorized home leave are entitled to leave-free travel time when they take home leave. This entitlement is limited to one leave period for each overseas tour. See USAREUR Supplemental 1 to AR 690-300.301 at <https://www.aeaim.hqusareur.army.mil/library/spl/pdf/ar690-300.301-s1.pdf> for detailed guidance.

Student Educational Travel

For employees receiving, or eligible to receive, a Living Quarters Allowance (LQA), dependents that are full-time college students, under age 23 and in undergraduate school, may be eligible for one round trip each twelve-month period from the overseas area of the employees assignment to their college location. The student must report to the employee's duty location for at least 14 consecutive days prior to authorized return travel to CONUS at Government expense. To start this process, the employee must complete a Request for Travel Orders form. The supervisor signs it, and the Resource Management Office provides the fund cite. After all is completed, the form is submitted to the servicing CPAC. The CPAC uses this information to prepare Travel Orders. Travel arrangements must be made through the local military Transportation Office.